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METAL EDGE SUMMER 1999

# KISS

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CITY

MOVIE MAGAZINE

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With GENE, PAUL And CAST

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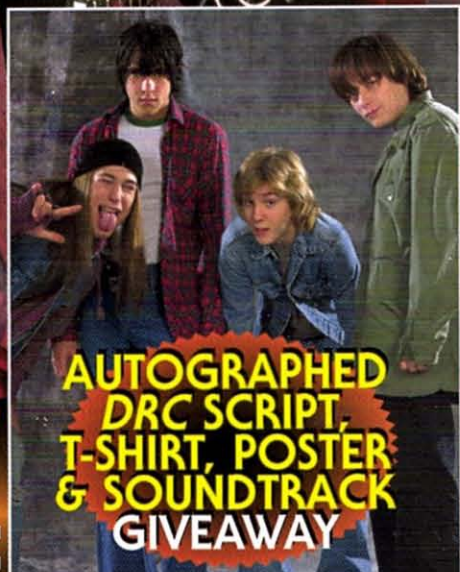
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# KISS

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THE OFFICIAL

# KISS

# DETROIT ROCK CITY

## MOVIE MAGAZINE

KISS WITH DRC's CAST & PRODUCERS



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# A Conversation With GENE SIMMONS

## Detroit Rock City's Producer on the Movie & the Latest News from the World of KISS

by Gerri Miller

■ He's a man of many talents, a hit-making musician, unparalleled dealmaker and marketer, and to a great extent, the mastermind of the phenomenon known as KISS. He's no stranger to movies, having acted in a few over the years including *Runaway*, *Wanted Dead or Alive*, and with his bandmates, the 1978 TV movie *KISS Meets the Phantom of the Park*. But with *Detroit Rock City*, KISS' first big-screen outing as a band, Gene Simmons makes his debut as producer, adding one more hat to the multitude he already wears quite well. We discussed the movie and myriad other KISS-related topics in several interviews over the last few months.



While Simmons appeared solo in a recent Nike spot and has several film and TV projects in the works as producer (and is having a new house built in the hills above L.A.), he insists that he's not neglecting the band. "There's more KISS stuff being done by me in the off time than I've ever done," he insists. Of everything on his plate, what he's looking forward to most is "getting back together with the band."

**G: Your role as producer, what did that entail?**

**GS:** There's a big difference between movie producer and record producer. When a guy produces a record, which I've done, he acts kind of like a director, telling the musicians, "This is wrong," or "That song could be better, how about trying this?" and rewriting the song with the band and making sure it is what it should be. In a movie the director plays the same role. The director tells the actors where to stand, how to do it, and is responsible for delivering the movie. The producer, or in this case producers, go get the deal from the studio, negotiate. In this case I negotiated rights and sync fees with music publishers and writers because there's other music as well as KISS music. So it's kind of a combination lawyer, manager, and babysitter.

**G: So it's more of a business/financial role than a creative one.**

**GS:** Yes, though ultimately the director and all the actors need the OK of the producer. The producer says, "I like this, I don't like that," "Change this, change that."

**G: Did you do that a lot?**

**GS:** Very little. Adam Rifkin, the director, was so in touch, so in tune with everything that it was next to none.

**G: You were on the road for most of the production period. How did you keep tabs on it?**

**GS:** Movies have dailies, which means every single day you get a videotaped copy of what they shoot. So the next day when the studio and everyone else gets a copy, that's when I got it. By Fed Ex.

**G: When did you have time to look at it?**

**GS:** You sit around in a hotel room for eight hours of the day doing nothing.

**G: Were you on the phone to Adam a lot?**

**GS:** Very little. When something's not wrong, don't fix it. The stuff was really coming out terrifically. There were some political issues between the studio and Adam, he had a point of view that didn't jibe with the studio's and neither of them were wrong. So I went in between them and said, "Look, we're making the same movie, here's are the areas we agree on, let's concentrate on where we don't." It was basically about the tone of the humor, and it was very quickly settled. Sometimes a fight is more about the fight. Once they took a look at the area of disagreement they came to an agreement. Most movies are made under a lot of stress. This was stress-free, which was a great compliment to New Line Cinema, who were completely professional about it.

**G: So take me through the time from the idea to getting it greenlighted.**

**GS:** I've been trying to get a KISS movie off the ground for well over 10 years. It went all the way back to *The Elder* in 1981.

**G: Why didn't it happen?**





Simmons, at the DRC shoot here, is irked by "All the stuff I read on the Internet and in magazines about how this band doesn't care about each other. Even though we have very little in common we're somehow tied together. We like different things, different foods, have different lifestyles and yet somehow there's this family thing. But it's tough to sit here and defend something. We let our actions speak for themselves."

**GS:** Like most things don't happen, you have an idea, one out of 100 happen, because you're not controlling everything. That includes touring and songs. We write songs for an album and most of them don't wind up on the record. Out of 100 songs you'll record 10 and people will only like one or two so your batting average is one or two out of 100. That's how life works. So through the years I've pitched many studios many times and New Line...Mike DeLuca, this is our third time up at bat together. I pitched him two other times. If at first you don't succeed...

**G:** Wasn't there something with Fox TV in the works?

**GS:** The history goes like this. I was developing a movie with Jeff Berg, an agent at ICM, the talent Agency. Floyd Mutrux, a screenwriter who's writing *Common Ground* for John Travolta and who wrote *American Hot Wax* and tons of stuff, and originally a guy named Gene Kirkwood who I know socially, a producer of *Rocky*, *Rocky II*, *The Pope of Greenwich Village*, *The Idolmaker*, through our friendship we started working on a KISS movie idea, which was going to be a big special effects movie. Floyd, Gene and I met every day and Paul joined us for about a week, getting ideas together and throwing ideas around for a story. Floyd and I eventually ended up with 250 pages of story, not a script. Then I went with Floyd and pitched it to four or five different studios. PolyGram, Universal, all reacted well to it but it was much too expensive a movie. At the same time Barry Levine found this script called *Detroit Rock City* and showed me the script. I said it was a great piece of material but I'm doing this big picture and don't want to compete, there can't be two KISS movies out there. But let's develop this as a movie of the week. I had meetings with Fox and a guy named Frank Von Zerneck was going to produce it with me. But as *Psycho Circus* was nearing completion I had less and less time to knock on doors and so on. I finally came to the point of view that I was going to stop the big budget motion picture and kick up the TV movie into a feature movie. At that point I had the wonderful job of calling everyone up and firing them. I told Levine that *Detroit Rock City* would be kicked up to a feature. We went to New Line Cinema and told them the story and Mike DeLuca got it right away. Within five minutes he said, "That's great, let's make the movie."

**G:** What was your main concern with regard to the way that KISS would be presented?

**GS:** That we would have control over everything, casting, everything. I had to negotiate the director deal, the actors. Eddie Furlong and Natasha Lyonne had some reservations

about being in the movie so I invited them to my birthday

more



# GENE SIMMONS

continued

party, which I held at a strip club in Beverly Hills. At one point I dropped down on my knees, so that in front of his friends Eddie could see that Gene Simmons was dropping to his knees and begging him to be in the movie. Whatever it takes.

**G: Did you have many changes to make in the script?**

**GS:** No. The script was as is, the basic polish came from the studio; it's their money. The creative process really is between the studio and the director.

**G: So once everything got going you left it in Adam's hands?**

**GS:** Yes. I must say Barry Levine was there a lot; he was on the set a lot and the daily dynamics, people getting along or clashing, he was there babysitting everybody.

**G: Let's talk about the day of the concert.**

**GS:** We were at The Skydome, up in Toronto on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of December. The next day we had a day off and we went to Hamilton, where the film crew put together an astonishing recreation of the *Love Gun* stage. A lot came from Tim Sullivan, everybody on this was a major KISS fan but he was supervising the details and saying this doesn't look right and so on. Everything was built from scratch. He looked at everything to the point of the length of Peter's hair, that it didn't quite match a vision in his mind. We went back to *KISSTORY* and looked at photos and Peter's hair was different lengths. So on this day off we had a 12-hour work day to shoot everything for the one scene at the end of the movie. It's the same way the Wizard of Oz appears at the end of the movie. This movie, although it's a KISS movie, is really more about KISS fans and matters of the heart. For us, it's something we've always believed in, as cornball as it is, without the fans we wouldn't be here and we owe it all to them. This is really a way for us to show that the experience of being in the audience and what it does to people, their hearts and minds, eyes and ears, is really what it's about and we're just the sort of messenger.

**G: Adam said you didn't leave the stage between setups.**

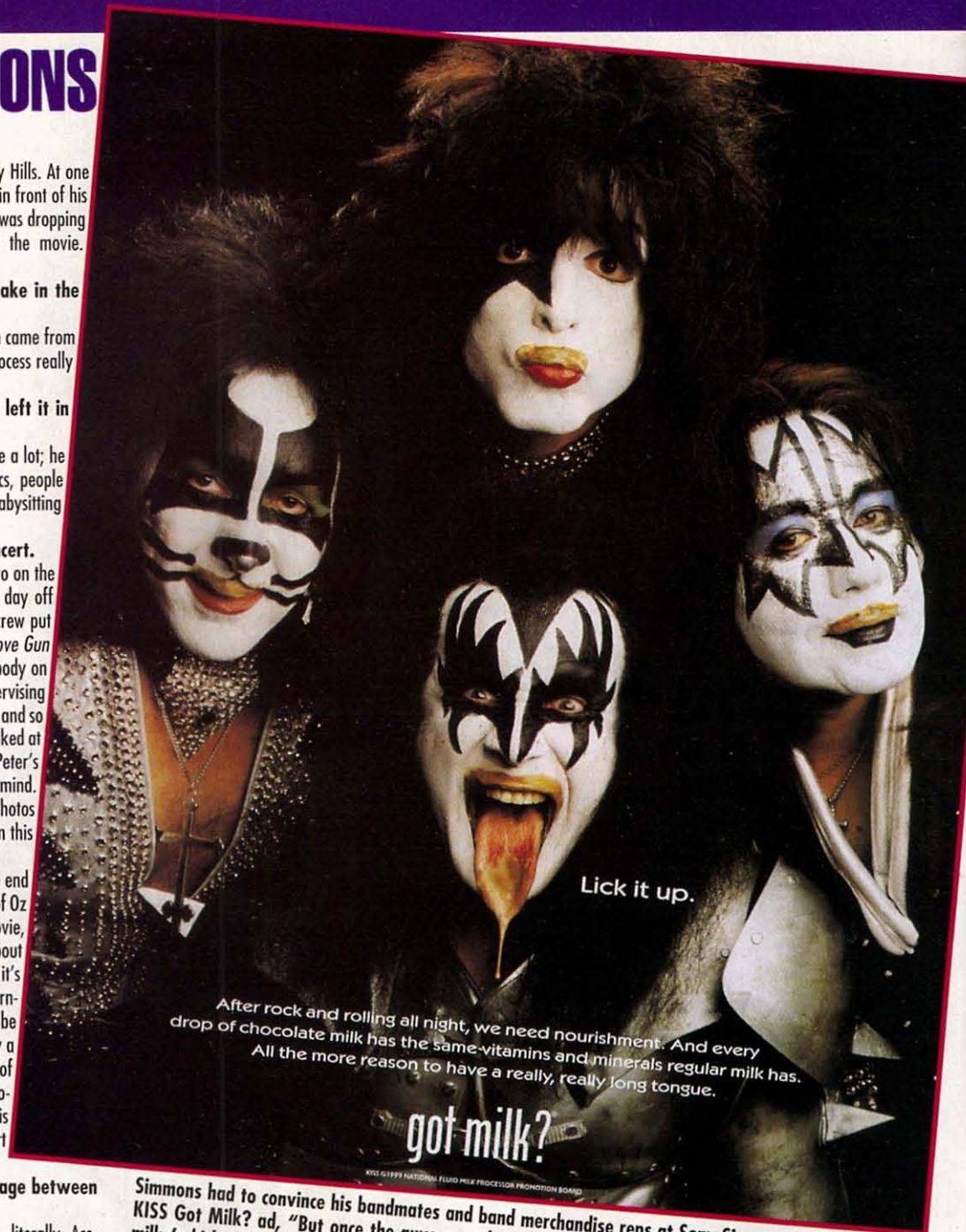
**GS:** We were on the stage the whole time, literally. Ace, Peter and Paul were great. They worked the crowd up. We had something like 8000 fans. The ones up front were paid extras and the rest showed up because they were fans and stayed the whole time. They had a ball.

**G: Was it a tiring day?**

**GS:** It was exhausting because of all the stop-and-go. In a concert situation, even though it's exhausting, it's a concentrated thing. You're on stage for two hours and the adrenaline takes over so you're barely aware of the time going by. You just know that by the end you're exhausted. This was stop and go, you film for five minutes and you stop. It's back and forth. It takes a toll, mentally and physically.

**G: You had to leave for another show after.**

**GS:** Yes we hopped on our jet and went to the next town. We basically crammed three days work into a day because we didn't have extra days. We were playing almost every day and a day off here and there we cherish as a way to get back our energy. You collapse on your bed and if you're lucky you have local company but other than that you try



After rock and rolling all night, we need nourishment. And every drop of chocolate milk has the same vitamins and minerals regular milk has. All the more reason to have a really, really long tongue.

got milk?

Simmons had to convince his bandmates and band merchandise reps at Sony Signatures to lobby for the KISS Got Milk? ad, "But once the guys saw the photos, everybody flipped." A concoction of chocolate milk (which showed up better than plain) and corn syrup (for staying power) was used in the Annie Leibovitz photos.

to catch your breath before the next show.

**G: Tim said a lot of pains were taken to see that all the extras wore the right clothes.**

**GS:** Bell bottoms, platform heels—just great.

**G: You saw someone wearing a Dynasty outfit and made him change.**

**GS:** I looked out in the audience and said "That's '79, '80 and doesn't belong here." Most people wouldn't pick that up but if you're really going for capturing a point in time on film, let's do it the real way.

**G: Tim said he noticed that Ace had blue shadow on and he didn't wear it in '78.**

**GS:** He would notice that. But we've always contended that it's about the spirit of something, that there is something such as becoming too anal and looking at the subatomic particles that make up something and losing the vision of

the entire thing.

**G: Once the shoot ended, you still had other things to do, right?**

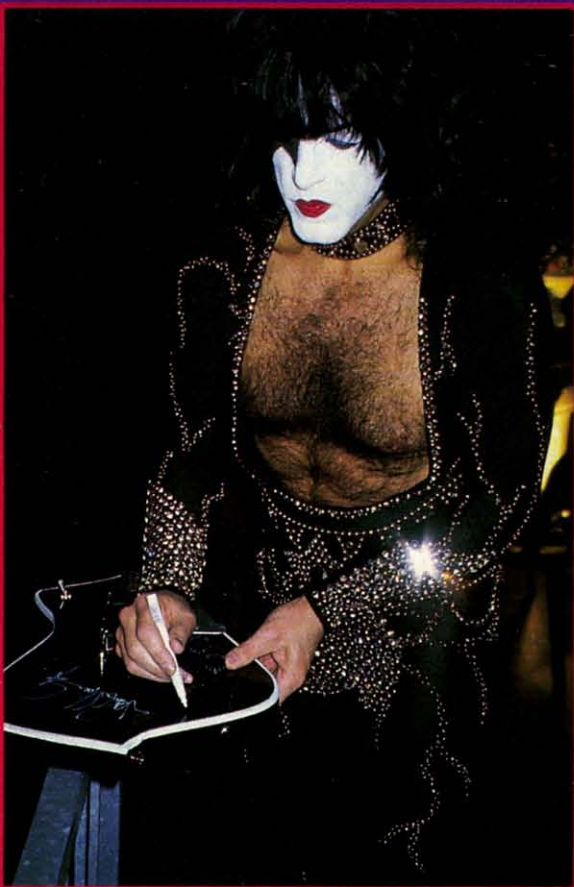
**GS:** Yes. That's a daily chore. You're talking about the right poster, the right trailer. The trailer will be in front of *Austin Powers*. The reaction has been terrific. But whether it's a big hit, a medium hit, who knows? It's all a crap shoot. The movie is going to be a good solid picture. I think people will get off on it. Everybody's very happy. In fact the studio was so happy they pushed it back to a summer film.

**G: What will KISS do to promote the movie?**

**GS:** Whenever we can use the opportunity to talk about the movie, not only because it's about KISS but because it's a pretty neat movie. We used the Super bowl opportunity to talk about the movie.

**G: I know it's the '70s and there was more open**





While KISS appeared last January at the *American Music Awards* (where Paul Stanley and Peter Criss and his tech Eddie Kanon are seen backstage here) and were nominated for a Grammy Award, they couldn't attend because they were on tour in Europe at the time. "Though we appreciate it, it doesn't mean a hell of a lot to us," Simmons insists. "The Grammys are backroom politics. The people have nothing to do with it," he explains. "I don't need that validity. I get that from the fans."

**drug use, but you've always been so anti-drug. How do you reconcile its use in the film?**

**GS:** I still am. An idiot is an idiot whether he lives in the past, present or future. Anything that turns your senses off is the enemy and anybody that's willing to do it to himself is an out and out idiot. The movie's point of view is these kids, these KISS fans. There's a scene where they light up marijuana. But the movie isn't intended to preach anything in the same way when you have a slasher film, the producer or the writer don't want you to go out and slash somebody's throat. These are the characters, one of them happens to smoke. There are characters that smoke cigarettes and I don't do that either. I think it's idiotic. That doesn't mean a character in the movie shouldn't do it. It's a movie, not a message.

**G: What do you think of the actors in the movie?**

**GS:** Sam Huntington's great, Giuseppe, Jimmy, they're all excellent. Eddie Furlong may be more well known from *Terminator 2*, *American History X*, *Pecker*. Some of the actors were not KISS fans going into it, but afterward they were turned on to a brand new world.

**G: Tommy Thayer got material from you for the opening sequence.**

**GS:** He came over to my house, went through my scrapbooks and pulled photos to use in that. Everything that looks real is real. One of a kind pieces that can't be duplicated, actual posters from the time period, actual dolls and so on.

**G: Let's talk about the music. How much were you involved in what was used?**

**GS:** It's really more Adam's picture and between Adam, Barry and a company that came on board as a music supervisor they have a point of view of what to put in a scene. Cheap Trick's "Surrender" is going to be in a scene when they're going to Detroit: "Mom is alright, Dad is alright, Got my KISS records on." It really goes well with the scene. I try to make a deal, negotiate how much the track will be and what will they get and that kind of stuff, stuff I'm not

embarrassed to do at all. My point of view and I think should be everybody's, is whatever's gotta be done, roll up your sleeves and do it. Because by the time you get somebody else to do it it's over.

**G: You re-recorded "Detroit Rock City."**

**GS:** Yes. Believe it or not, KISS really recorded a new version, Ace, Peter, Paul and Gene. We actually went in the studio and played together. If we're going to get up and play in the movie it should be brand new music and not already recorded music from the album. That was the point of view of our director and that's what we did.

**G: You recorded in the fall?**

**GS:** Yes around November. It was all done within three hours beginning to end. No problem.

**G: What about the song Diane Warren wrote? What was the idea there?**

**GS:** You've got to get the movie company excited about the soundtrack and Paul has had a relationship, a friendship with Diane Warren for many, many years, before she became who she is. It was Paul's idea to call her up and ask her. I haven't heard the song yet although Paul tells me it sounds like a smash, a real radio staple. That's the kind of thing a soundtrack needs—you need a radio staple to sell the movie. Whatever it takes. As the rules keep changing you've got to change with them or you're left behind. The idea was to give something to use on radio and we haven't been writing things like that, but you never know what's going to be a hit anyway.

**G: Did the fact that Diane's song for Aerosmith went to #1 have anything to do with it? It was their biggest hit even though they didn't write it.**

**GS:** Oh of course. But I don't think anyone cares that bought the song.

**G: There's been talk about a second volume of the soundtrack with more songs.**

**GS:** It depends on the success of the first. You can't think about anything else but doing the first thing right the first time. Clearly there's room for a second one if the first one

goes. Sometimes the soundtrack explodes and gets big even though the movie doesn't and vice versa, the movie could be huge and the soundtrack couldn't, or they both could do well.

**G: What about other music? Any recording plans?**

**GS:** No, but there will be more KISS music. In the time off I'll be writing a lot, hopefully the other guys will. We're going right back on tour so that means we won't get a chance to go in and do another record probably until 2000.

**G: Are there any songs left over from *Psycho Circus* that might be used?**

**GS:** There are about six or seven recorded songs with lyrics that we may take another look at, we may rerecord them or, never use them. We have the largest catalog probably of any band in the world and we have several...box sets, live albums, greatest hits. There's lots of records left on the contract.

**G: Speaking of the boxed set...**

**GS:** I work on it every day. When it comes out it's gonna be a killer.

**G: I gather that won't be this year.**

**GS:** Absolutely not.

**G: The '96-'97 tour was huge, a record breaker. And you talked about how the *Psycho Circus* tour was going to be even bigger with the circus and the 3D. But you scaled it back.**

**GS:** We weren't out there long enough to make it like that. And the scope...we bit off more than we can chew. You go in there with massive plans and the forces of gravity hit you. We wanted to go in there and really give them bang for the buck, put a full circus in front of every show, we had everything planned.

**G: What went wrong?**

**GS:** When you go to every single city every single hall has laws about what you can put over the audience's heads and so on and every hall has their own insurance issues and most of them told us, "No, you can't do that."

**G: You had a successful run in Europe. What were more**



# GENE SIMMONS

continued

"We're like cockroaches," says Simmons of KISS, with lookalike juniors in Grand Rapids, MI last Dec. 30 here. "We've been around forever and we'll be here forever," he vows.



## the highlights?

**GS:** Stockholm, Sweden was magnificent. The European tour was sold out throughout. When we got to Stockholm the European edition of *Playboy* was out in Oslo. We had a big *Playboy* party after the Stockholm show. We took over a place called the Opera House after the concert and there were hundreds of girls made up like the girls in the issue wearing very little else. It's good to be king.

**G:** Were you disappointed about having to cancel Russia?

**GS:** I'm not disappointed, I'm glad to be alive. Russia's a very strange country. They had this ideal of communism and when that turned out to be the evil empire they never

revolted against these horrific people, from Stalin on. They caused misery for 70 years around the world. The Russians are trying to make headway and come over to capitalism but it's still f.cked up there. The road from communism to capitalistic democracy is a slow one and people can't figure out when they don't have enough food to eat that it takes a while. They keep seeing America doing better and better and there's a lot of jealousy there. Their perception is America is NATO and NATO is America and America is bombing the Balkans. There was an incident in front of the American Embassy where people got out with guns and the Russian police shot them before they had the chance to do any harm. That's all we had to hear. Not the time to be

American rock stars in Russia.

**G:** Did it cost you a lot to cancel?

**GS:** As always, any time you don't do a show it costs an enormous amount of money but your life is worth more than that. Once before we had something like that in Argentina. In the early '80s, we canceled an entire S. American thing because there were threats to blow up the stadium.

**G:** How was South America this time?

**GS:** South America started off with the stadium in Buenos Aires. Down there it's like Beatlemania. They camp out night and day.

**G:** What was the average attendance?

**GS:** 55,000. Then we went to Porto Alegre, Brazil, 70,000 people there. São Paulo, 60,000. Then Puerto Rico, which was an indoor show and then to Mexico City, where there were about 60,000 people. Everybody had a ball.

**G:** Was the show the same as in Europe?

**GS:** Yes, except we were using South American staging. Much too expensive to bring it.

**G:** So you couldn't use the lifts and the steps and do the stunts?

**GS:** We did. Paul flew, I flew. We did all that. But the crew had to work a lot harder because the staging, the stuff everything hangs on, is sub-standard. The electricity is sub-standard. It's amateur time. There's not only a language problem but they've never built anything that big. Our crew knows exactly what it's doing but if it had been a local crew it wouldn't have been safe. There would have been much more accidents. So it required triple the time to set everything up. You're talking about huge amounts of tonnage on that stage, and we had to carry our own electricity. You're playing a big stadium and all they're geared up for is turning the lights on and off, not to power a KISS concert. We have a huge lighting system.

**G:** So everything went according to plan?

**GS:** Rammstein, they did very well, but at the end they got into a fight with each other and one of them ended up being thrown through a window, in Mexico City.

**G:** The singer sets himself afire. Familiar, huh?

**GS:** I think it's all good. I don't care about originality. It's an overused word. Nothing is original under the sun, and who cares if it is. The only thing that's important is people get their money's worth. If you go and see a band and see that they're trying to give you more than less...

**G:** When will you be back on the road?

**GS:** We're looking to tour some time in October.

**G:** Starting here?

**GS:** We don't know. It's way off. We're meeting to look at stage designs, lighting rigs and all that. Our favorite thing is to get in front of the fans who put us there in the first place. As long as we can do big shows, have fun doing it and put a smile on our fans' faces, it begins and ends there for us.

**G:** Is this KISS' farewell tour?

**GS:** I've heard that rumor, but no word yet. The truth is any show or tour can be your last show, you never know.

**G:** I've heard that songs from the '80s and '90s will be added to the set.

**GS:** Yes, we will be adding stuff that Ace and Peter originally had not played on. We never wanted to do that, but the overwhelming sense we get from letters, the Internet and just talking is that fans think it would be a kick.

**G:** Do you know which songs?

**GS:** I would venture to guess "Lick It Up," "Heaven's on Fire," "I Love It Loud." The stuff that they know more than not. Everybody believes that people want obscure songs. They don't. The few who are really great fans are still not the voice of the majority so when they want you to do an all-Elder show or more obscure stuff they might be happy but not 90% of the rest of the people. We try to do the best





Last January 26, KISS promoted *Detroit Rock City* to the TV people who buy rights to films at the NATPE convention in New Orleans, schmoozing and mingling with other celebs including Martha Stewart and Dick Clark. "We stopped traffic. There was a major line," says Simmons. "It was a lot of fun. We answered questions and took pictures, and showed a [promo] reel from the movie."



we can and please as many of the fans as possible but the truth is it's always a tough choice what to play. The fans that go to see every show, 20-30 shows or more on a tour, complain that the songs are the same. Well, they're not the same for the people seeing it for the one and only time in Oshkosh. But we are gonna add songs from the '80s and take a look at some more obscure stuff.

**G: Anything from *Revenge*?**

**GS:** Haven't gone there yet but it's a possibility.

**G: Any plans for the millennial New Year's eve?**

**GS:** We do have a couple of variables. There's Madison Square Garden, but we have to see what our options are. It's far enough in the future that we can keep those options open. A lot of ideas are percolating.

**G: What do you think of Paul doing *Phantom of the***

**Opera?**

**GS:** It's the coolest. There's nobody better to do it than Paul. He sings like nobody else. He said it's the hardest he's ever worked. It's time consuming.

**G: Do you have any desire to act again?**

**GS:** Anything's possible. I get offered stuff all the time, from the silly, like being the Klingon in *Star Trek* to being heroin dealer in the next Samuel L. Jackson movie.

**G: You've done that kind of role.**

**GS:** Offered it again. Maybe I look a certain way. I don't look Swedish. I have that dark thing happening. People look at me and think, "He's high all the time." The saying "Don't judge a book by its cover" can be applied to me.

**G: You created that scary image, the God of Thunder.**



**GS:** I'm aware. But it's usually the guy who looks like a bookworm who's using heroin. I haven't ever gotten drunk. I gag and want to hurl as soon as I smell [alcohol].

**G: What about other projects as producer?**

**GS:** In August there will be a one hour Fox special, documentary in style but it will also have footage from the movie premiere. Sometime in the fall there will be two separate movies of the week. I just finalized negotiations. There will be a CBS movie called *Rock and Roll All Nite*, which is based on a story that will involve the band in some way but is more a story about a guy and a girl. KISS is incidental to the thing but it's all about the world of KISS. Sort of a *Sleepless in Seattle* meets KISS.

**G: Will it have KISS music in it? Is it set in the present?**

**GS:** Yes.

**G: Will it be cast with big stars or unknowns?**  
**GS:** Both. Then there's the KISS biographical film. Probably for Fox.

**G: The band won't be in it and actors will play KISS?**

**GS:** Yes. Four guys meet, streets of New York. The story of KISS.

**G: Is it cast yet?**

**GS:** No. There's no script yet.

**G: Any non-TV film projects?**

**GS:** There are far too many to talk about right now.

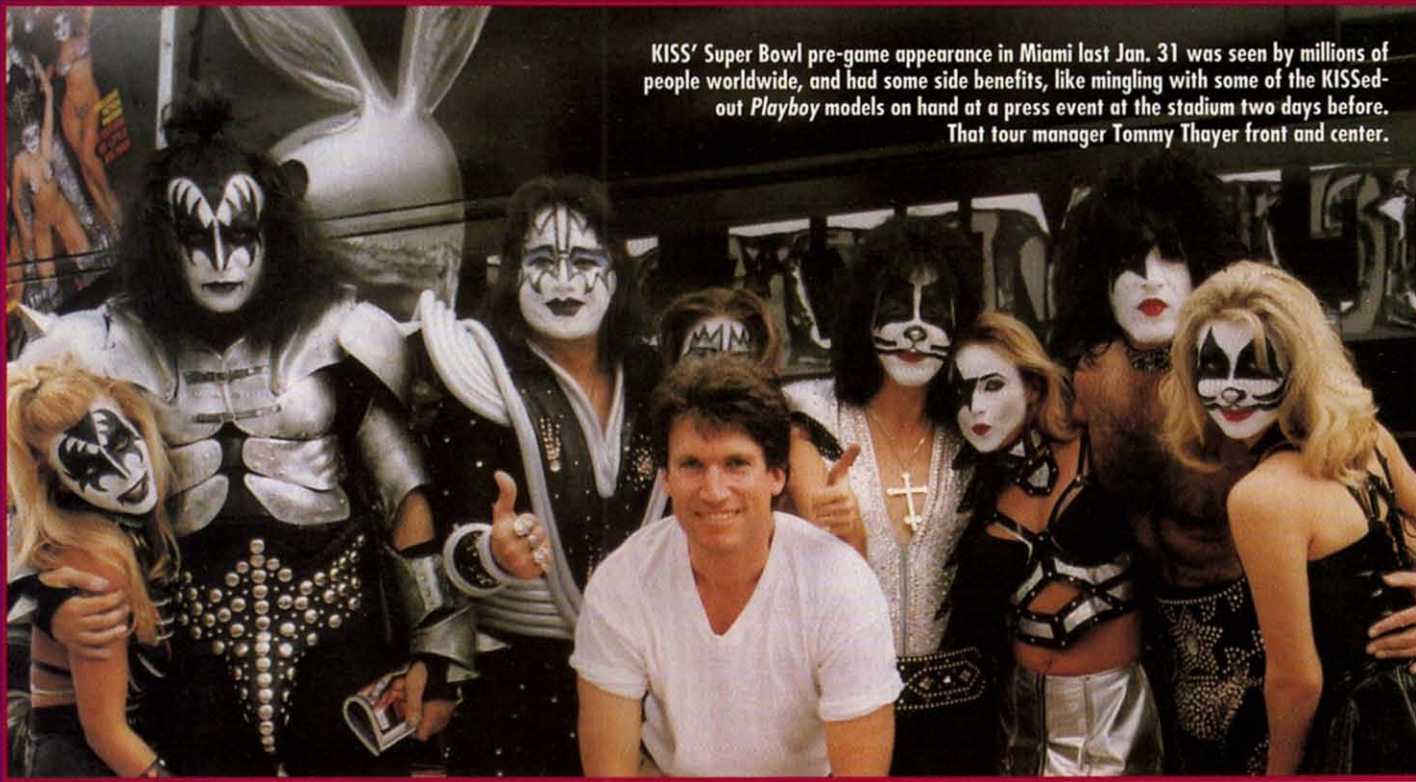
**G: Can you fill me in on this wrestling thing?**

**GS:** The Warriors of KISS, for WCW. The first one is the Demon—very cool guy, spits fire—and thereafter will come Starchild, Spacemen, and Catman, one every couple of months. They're not called by our names but by the personalities. Then there will be Lady Demon, Space Girl and so

more



KISS' Super Bowl pre-game appearance in Miami last Jan. 31 was seen by millions of people worldwide, and had some side benefits, like mingling with some of the KISSed-out Playboy models on hand at a press event at the stadium two days before. That tour manager Tommy Thayer front and center.



## GENE SIMMONS

continued

on. At the end will be a Battle Royale, the Warriors of KISS vs. whoever. The idea is to go where no band has gone before.

**G: Where are you finding the wrestlers?**

**GS:** Eric Bischoff, the president of WCW, is doing that. They have a training facility like baseball has farm teams. That's where they'll come from. Complete unknowns. You will never see their faces.

**G: Do you have any concerns about safety in light of the recent accidental death of wrestler Owen Hart?**

**GS:** Every time someone stubs a toe or something happens, the entire thing becomes dangerous. Cars, airplanes—accidents happen every day. It's sad and my condolences go out, but I think it's better that people throw each other around in a ring than on the street.

**G: Will you attend any of the events?**

**GS:** Sure, I'd love to. I've never been to a wrestling event.

**G: What's going on with the KISS video game?**

**GS:** The Gathering Of Developers, otherwise known as GOD, are bringing out a *Psycho Circus* game to end all games. That's coming soon [with] KISS music, new monsters, very stylized. Brilliant Digital is bringing out 26 episodes of a game you can order over the computer. It's like a TV series in that each game is a new game.

**G: When will this be available?**

**GS:** Probably before fall. There's something else, from WizardWorks. It's a computer game based around trivia, to test your knowledge about KISS.

**G: How involved are you in these projects?**

**GS:** I have very limited understanding of content, what I do is see that the graphics and the integrity of who we are is maintained so that even if it's a stylistic version of KISS, it's still KISS. Here's a scoop—I just finalized the deal for the first 90-minute animated KISS superhero show that will debut in November nationwide. For Saban and Fox.

**G: How is KISSTORY II coming along?**

**GS:** I got the first proofs and it looks great. It will blow you away. It's coming soon, clearly by the time the movie comes out. If anyone wants to order, it's 1-800-905-KISS. I'm knocked out by it. It's gorgeous. There are literally thousands of toys. And there's a 6' accordion pullout of beautiful girls in KISS makeup. Each 1000 will have a different pose of the girls. They're topless wearing KISS makeup. On the back of the poster is behind the scenes photos of the girls getting made up, stripping, whatever. The idea each time is to do something different and exciting—more toys, more games, more stuff to make every other band out there green with envy that they can't do it and we can.

**G: There were problems on KISSTORY, such as with the binding.**

**GS:** You know, it's close to 10 lbs., and if you toss it around it's gonna break. People are always going to complain. But I make sure the book won't come out till it's right. If it comes out and it isn't right we get crucified. It has to be everything fans want it to be.

**G: What else is in the works?**

**GS:** There's an artist who's doing a limited edition of 500 original paintings. We may have Peter Max do something in the future, 7' high. A new generation of KISS bears with different outfits, and a second generation of 2 1/4' moveable action figures in *Love Gun* outfits, from Fun For All. You press a button music comes out. Absolutely by far the best action figures I've seen. They're available through Spencer Gifts. The first 25,000 disappeared so they ordered another 25,000.

**G: Is yours the most popular?**

**GS:** Three to one. I'm the ugliest one, that's why. There's a Perrier campaign in Europe with a model sipping it with a KISS T-shirt on. There are going to be billboards and posters. The idea is to push the envelope and take over the world if we can. There's a big blow up KISS chair, a limited run of those. Zippo lighters. KISS candles, another generation of the trading cards, golfing gear. Club covers and actual golf balls with KISS on them. I don't know what golf has to do with KISS but I don't care. This is my dream, I'm dreaming it. *Psycho Circus* is up to issue #20 or so and doing gangbusters. The compilation of issues is up to issue #2 and more are coming. We're on the cover of *Famous*

*Monsters of Filmland*, front, back and two inside covers. It's a lifelong dream for me because when I was a kid that was the magazine I read. We had four solo covers of *Kerrang*, *Spin*, and two in France on *Rock Hard*. We've been on the cover of *Fortune*.

**G: What cover haven't you been on, and want to be?**

**GS:** *The Christian Science Monitor*. That would be good.

**G: Um, doubtful...**

**GS:** Anything is possible, any time. The clock goes 24 hours a day and I'm working my tail off because of and for KISS. What will tomorrow bring? I don't know. I'm interested in everything that's good.

**G: Bruce Fairbairn, who produced *Psycho Circus*, passed away in May. Any comments?**

**GS:** It's heartbreaking. He was an upstanding guy. It seems that on the surface he was a happy guy. I never saw any booze, drugs, or even smoking. He seemed like a healthy, standup guy. It completely caught us off guard. I was shocked. All I know is they found him dead. Then I found out that one of my best friends when I was growing up, Seth Dogramajian, passed away.

**G: Of what?**

**GS:** That I don't know either. He was the first guy I was in bands with, my pal in school, and we used to publish science fiction fantasy fanzines together. He was a great guy.

**G: When people close to you, and to your age, pass away suddenly, does it make you more aware of your own mortality?**

**GS:** I've always been aware of that. I've never taken life for granted. Every day you live is one less day you'll be alive. That's a good perspective. As far as we know we're only passing through once so as cornball as it sounds, you can have a choice in life: you can live it or not.

**G: Any thoughts on the turn of the millennium?**

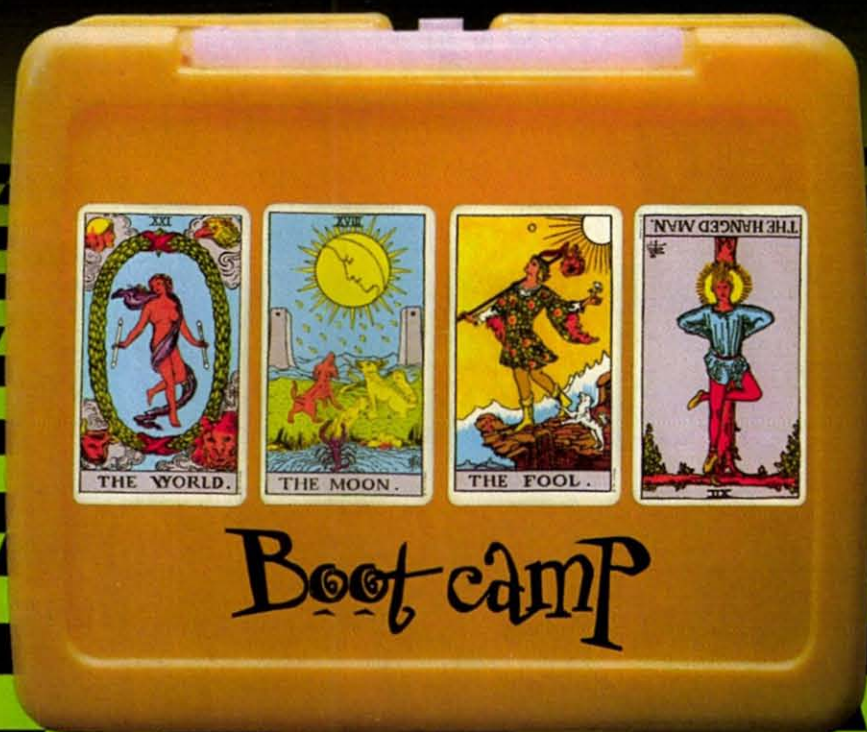
**GS:** People are making far too much of it. The best way to enjoy life is to make every day your millennium. There's no other choice. If one day is so high, what about the next day? If you've got your health, all the good stuff: good food, great looking girls, and a hunger. That's what it's about. •



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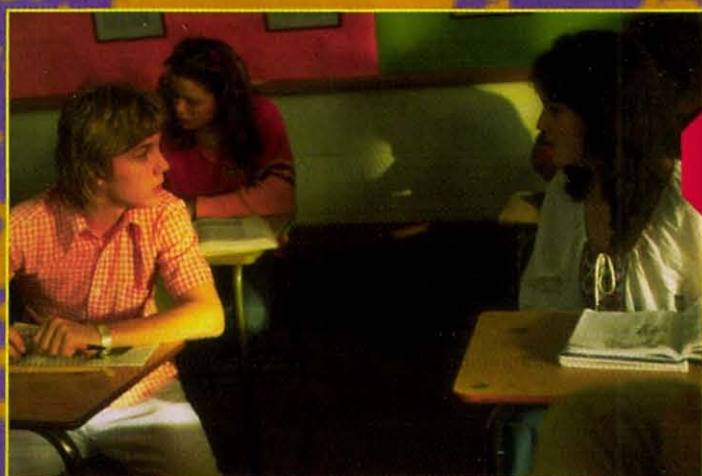
by Gerri Miller

# Detroit Rock

## Memorable Moments from the Movie



From the very start, it's no Mystery that these kids are huge KISS fans.



Jam's mom, who finds—and incinerates—the precious KISS tickets, rudely interrupts a budding classroom romance.



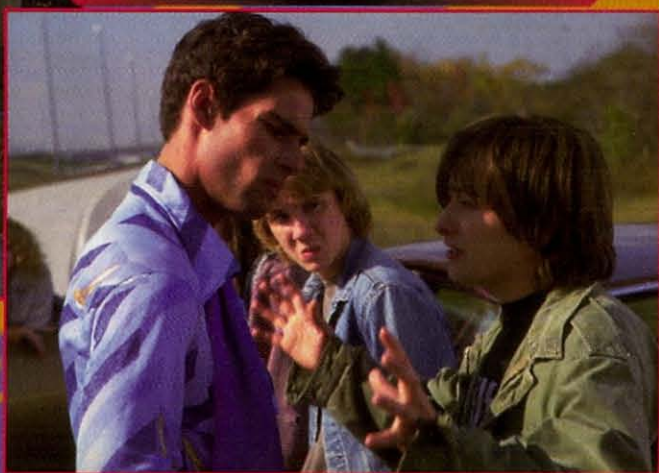


# City Scrapbook

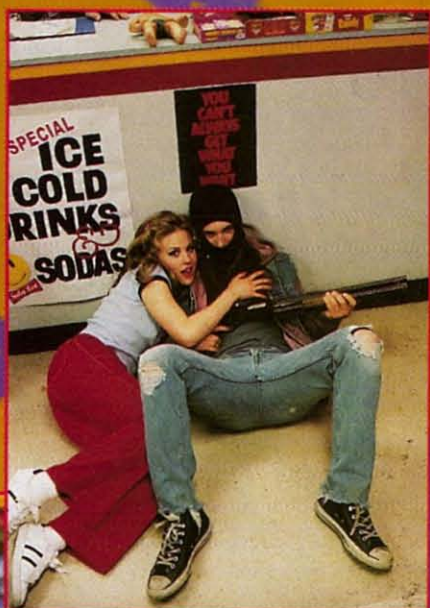
It's 1978 and four KISS fans—Hawk (Edward Furlong), Jam (Sam Huntington), Trip (James DeBello) and Lex (Giuseppe Andrews) want nothing more than to see their favorite band in concert. What happens to them along the way is the hilarious comedy of circumstances that is *Detroit Rock City*.



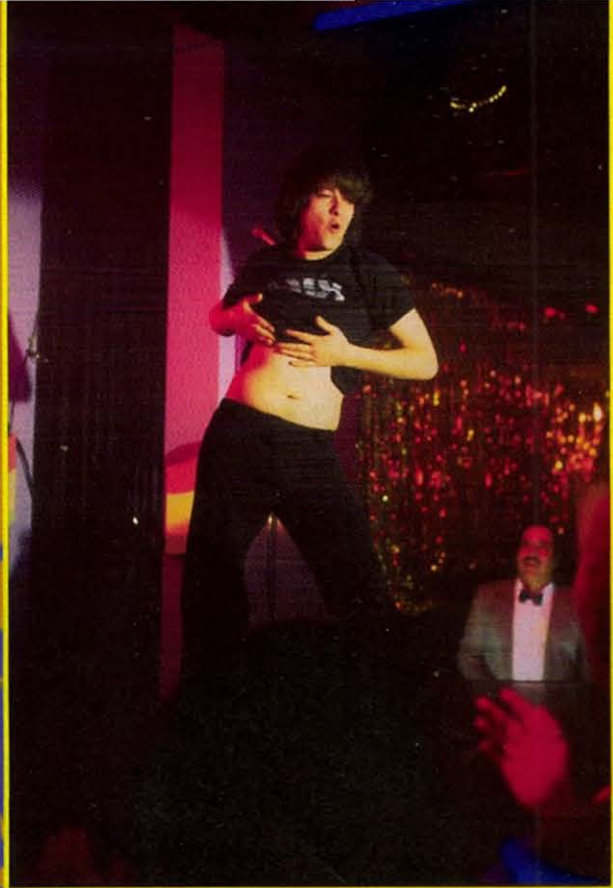
After springing Jam from the dreaded St. Bernard's, the foursome hits the road. A highway confrontation with a carful of disco kids (David Quane, Emmanuelle Chriqui, Nick Scotti) ends badly for the latter.



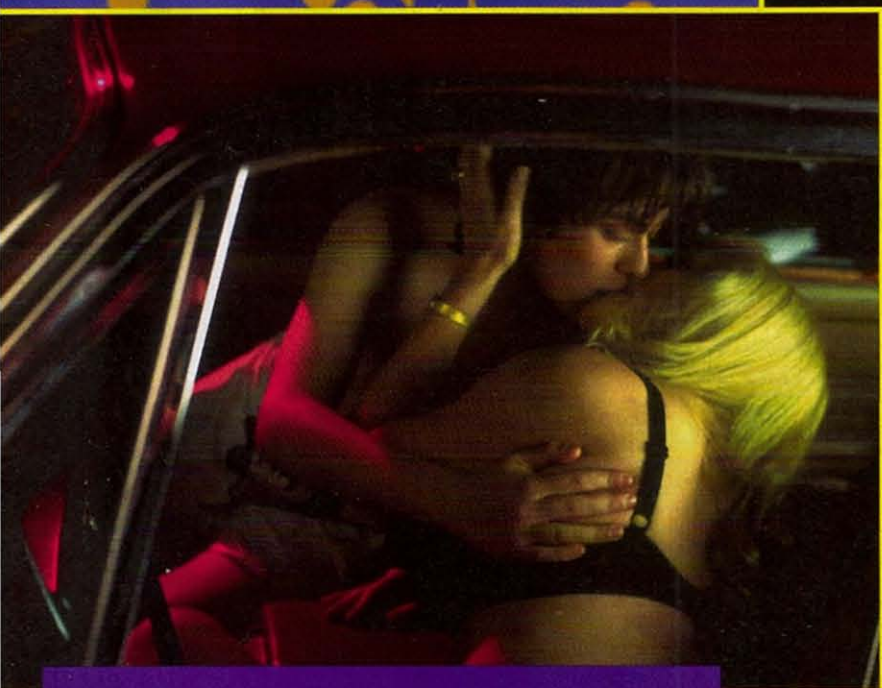
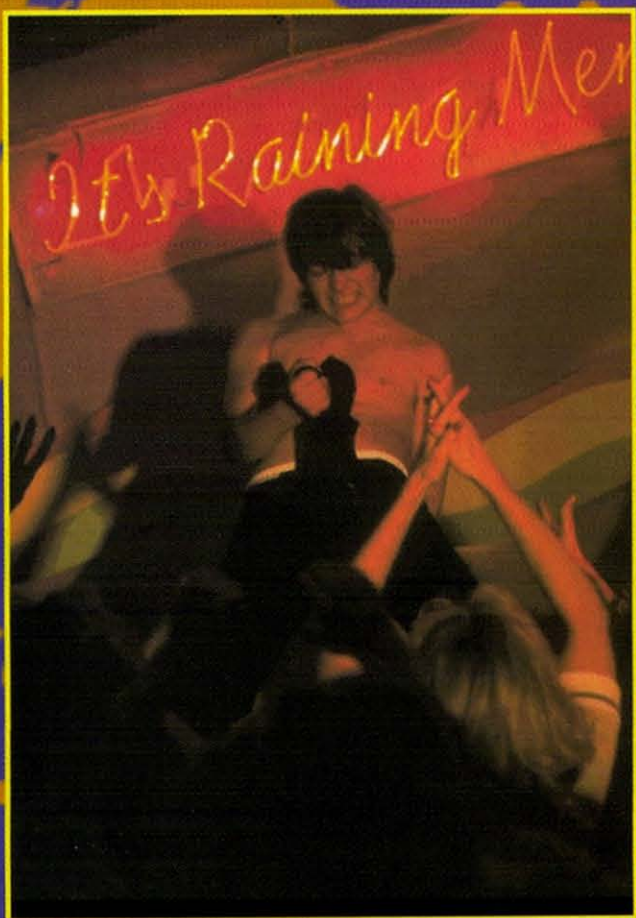
The friends split up in an effort to score new tickets once in Detroit, and Trip, after an encounter with a younger fan (Cody Jones), ends up foiling a robbery at the Smiley-Mart and winning the attentions of the cashier (Kristen Booth).







Desperate for cash, Hawk takes it all off at a strip club to the tune of "Strutter," and catches the eye of Amanda (Shannon Tweed), who offers an invitation he can't refuse.



**KISS**



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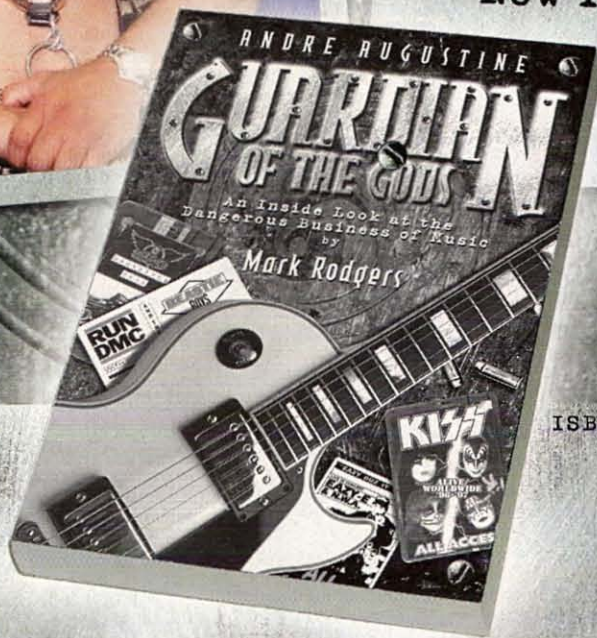
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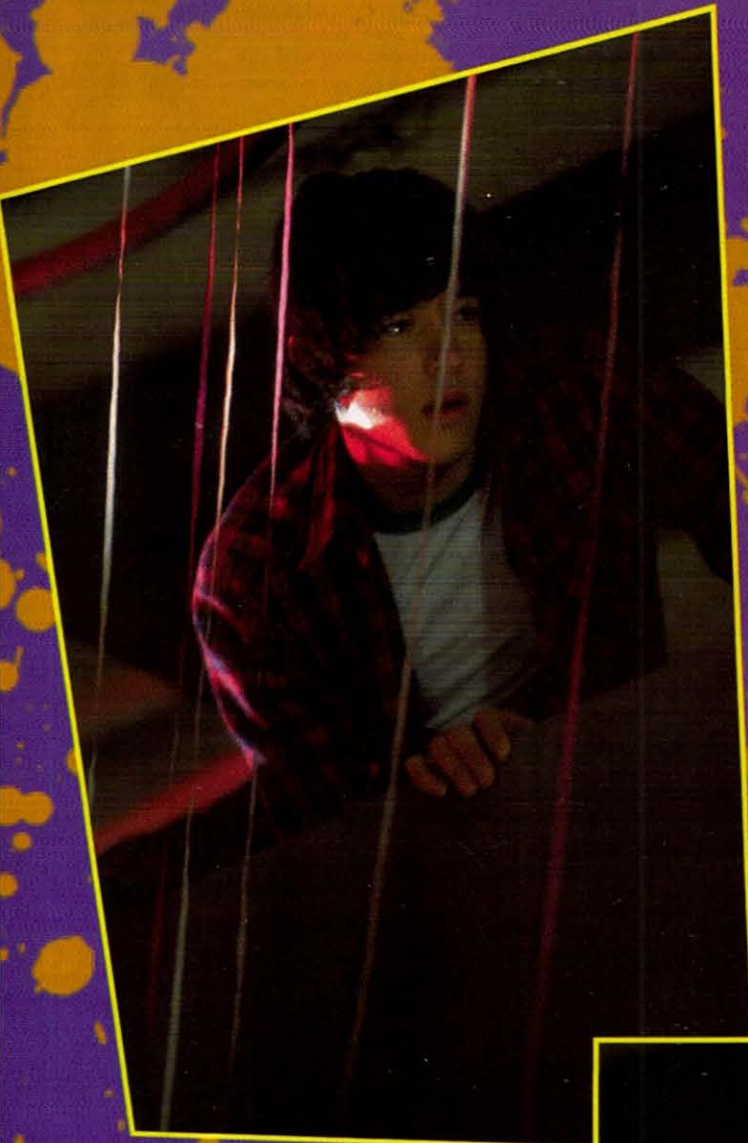
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Lex sneaks backstage and gets an eyeful of some racy revelry until Security catches up to him and he makes a hasty exit.





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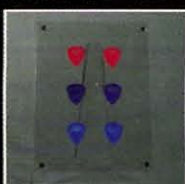
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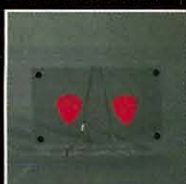
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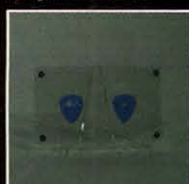
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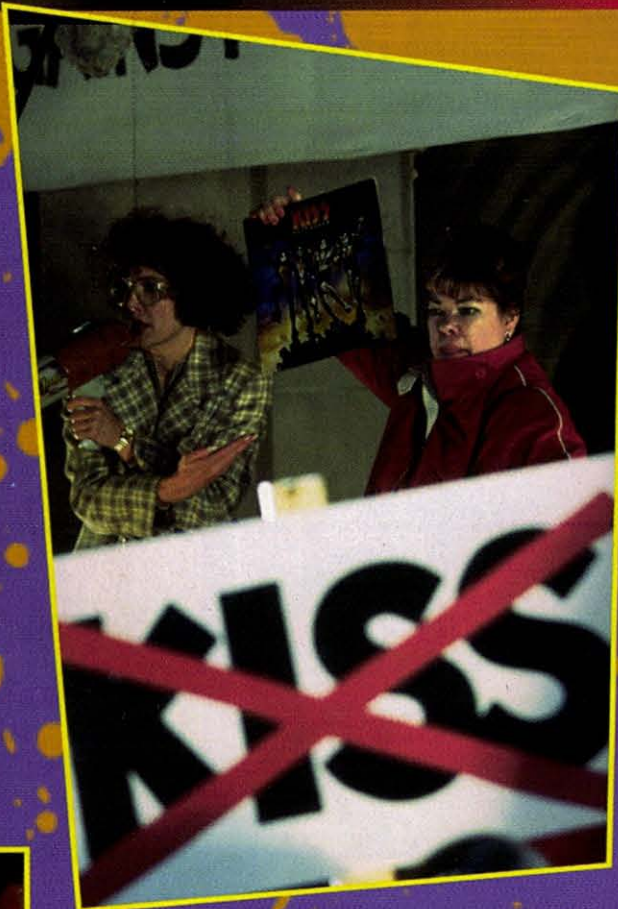
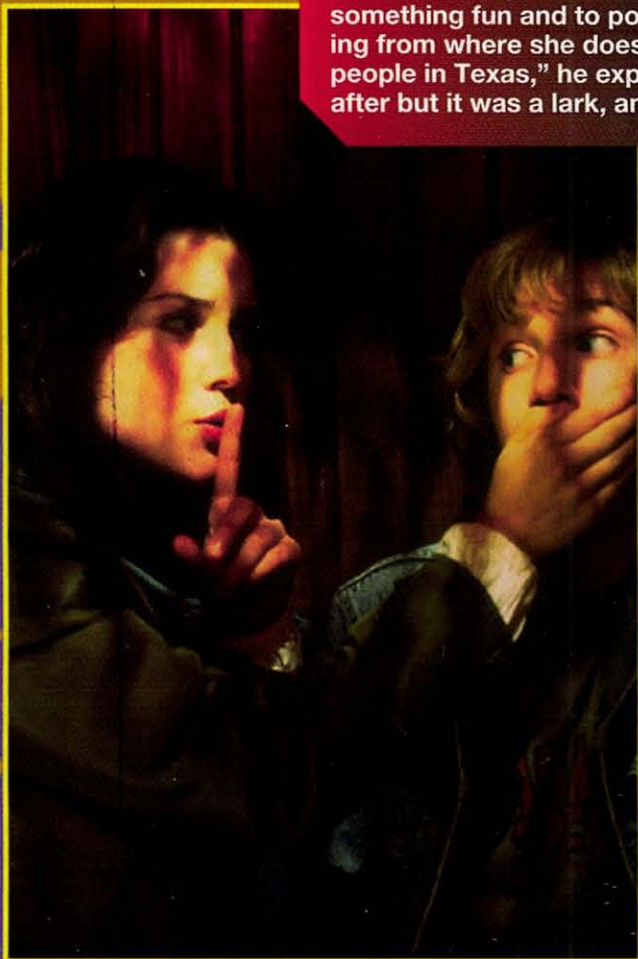
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Jam and Beth meet secretly in the church confessional as the Mothers Against the Music of KISS picket outside. The woman at left is none other than Pam Bowen Stanley, the actress wife of Paul. "This was an opportunity for her to do something fun and to portray something that's very unlike her, although coming from where she does it's not that unfamiliar. She's from a town of like 900 people in Texas," he explains. "It certainly wasn't something she'd normally go after but it was a lark, and she did a great job."



Bloodied but exhilarated, the triumphant four finally get to see their idols (that's Ace's daughter Monique Frehley at right).





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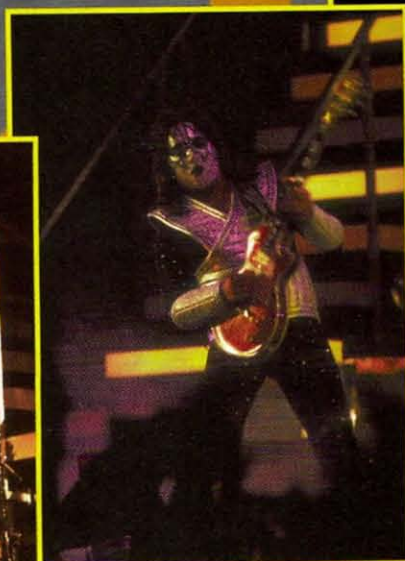
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The climactic concert scene, shot on KISS' day off between tour dates, required bringing the *Love Gun* costumes out of storage—they've been wearing *Destroyer* outfits on the *Psycho Circus* tour.



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# PAUL STANLEY

## A STAR TURN

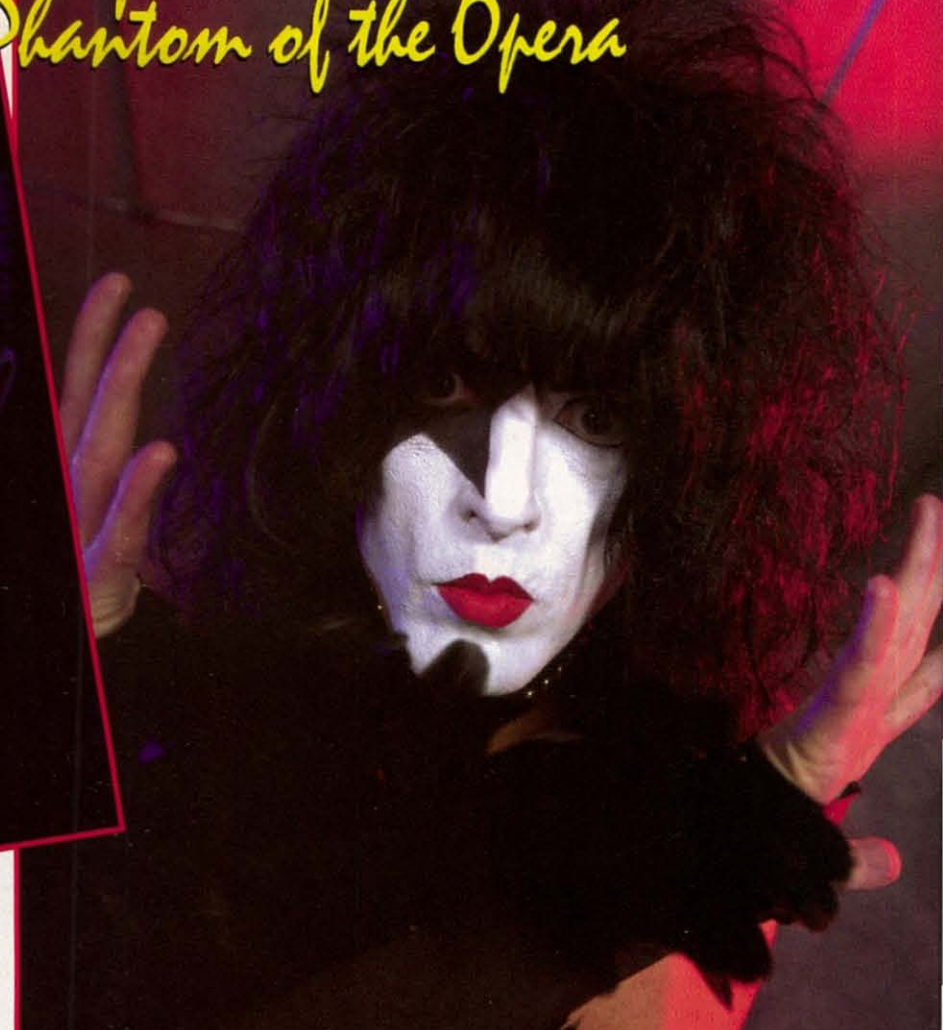
*The Starchild puts on a new mask as The Phantom of the Opera*



Stanley didn't mind having to cut his hair for his Phantom role. "In some way it's very freeing," he says. "After a certain amount of time we tend to view ourselves the way we're familiar with ourselves. It's a way of showing myself if nobody else that the trappings of what I wear or what I look like has nothing to do with who I am."

by Gerri Miller

■ Twenty-one years since he joined his bandmates in the TV movie *KISS Meets the Phantom of the Park*, Paul Stanley has encountered a different kind of Phantom this summer in Toronto, where he's making his musical theater debut in the title role in Andrew Lloyd Weber's Tony award winner *The Phantom of the Opera*. Making the transition from "Rock and Roll All Nite" to "The Music of the Night" has been quite a challenge, even for a performer as accomplished as Stanley, who has won rave from fans and critics alike. But KISS is never far from his thoughts, and also we talked about the band and his musical contributions to



KISS has no concrete recording plans but Stanley says that when the time comes "We promise to do the best album that we possibly can. At this point we're very much committed to anything we do and to giving it 100%." The band's record label, Mercury, was absorbed by Universal, but he's not concerned. "Change can be scary but it's always good," he believes. "Without being cold, we've outlasted everybody at all the companies we've been at. I don't lose sleep over it. I've seen too many record company presidents and staffs come and go. With this new song and the new soundtrack it's the first step on a new and exciting road."

*Detroit Rock City* over the course of two interviews, the most recent by phone two weeks into his Phantom run.

**G: How's *The Phantom* going?**

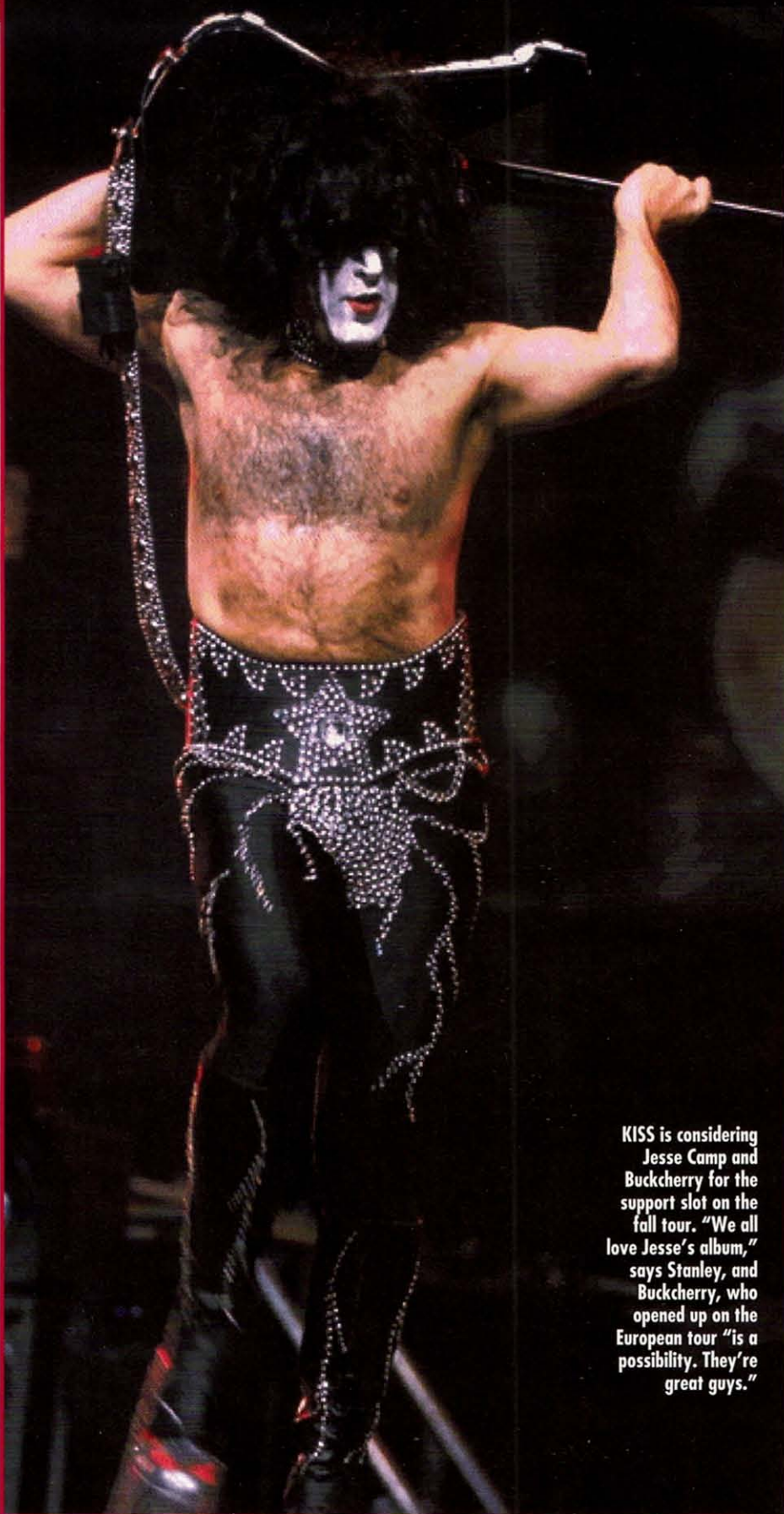
**P:** Awesome. It's great, the shows are packed, standing ovations every night, it's great. I've done 16 shows so far. I do eight shows a week, matinees on Wednesday and Saturday. Monday is dark.

**G: What was it like on opening night? How did you**

**feel before going on for the first time?**

**P:** There was a certain amount of nerves. If I didn't feel nervous I'd be out of my mind. There's nothing wrong with being nervous. When you're nervous or have some sort of anticipation it shows you're doing something where you're pushing your limits a bit. It's easy to find things that don't threaten you or give you an adrenaline rush but life is really about finding things that challenge you. The response





KISS is considering Jesse Camp and Buckcherry for the support slot on the fall tour. "We all love Jesse's album," says Stanley, and Buckcherry, who opened up on the European tour "is a possibility. They're great guys."

has been so great in the sense that I'm enjoying it immensely. I can't say enough about the rush of doing it and the feedback. Every show ends with a standing ovation. On some nights they're selling stools because every seat is completely full. Besides KISS fans there's a lot of theater

people, maybe initially coming wishing that I wasn't there, but the idea is to please everyone in the theater. There are people here that go to the theater a lot and there are people who have questions about seeing me, and other people who are very excited about seeing me and I want all of

them on their feet at the end.

**G: When did you decide to do this, and how did it come about?**

P: It was January. I had to audition. I had to go to New York and audition for [director] Hal Prince's people and [composer] Andrew Lloyd Weber's people. My agent called and asked if I'd be interested in doing it. It's been running in Toronto for 10 years and was in New York and London. I had seen it about 10 years ago. When I saw it I said, "I want to do this," the same way when I saw the Beatles I said, "I want to do this." It was part of the master plan, so to speak. I kind of filed it away. So I went to New York and auditioned for everybody. They told me what they wanted and I went in, and a half-hour later they called my agent and said, "How quickly can he do it?"

**G: It was that fast?**

P: Yeah, the acceptance came together but I had a KISS tour to do.

**G: While you were on tour were you preparing for this role?**

P: Yeah. I couldn't sing any of it because it's a completely different style of singing. Your voice is a muscle and if you work it into one type of singing it doesn't respond very well to another. You can actually confuse your voice so it will tend to do one thing when it's supposed to do another. So I literally memorized everything in my head rather than singing it. After the last KISS show in Mexico City I went backstage and cut my hair off and went home for a day and then flew to Toronto and went right into very intensive six-days-a-week rehearsals.

**G: Did you have a voice coach?**

P: I have somebody in Toronto who I saw every day just to help me with some of the questions I had about how to approach certain parts of the music.

**G: How does it compare to singing at a KISS show?**

P: Much more difficult. It takes a completely different kind of mindset and a completely different concentration. It's naked. When I'm singing in *Phantom* it's very exposed, there's no room for error, there's no room for improvising, there's no room for changing, it's very specific in the way it gets approached. [In KISS] I can change melodies whenever I feel like it. That's not the case with this, it's very much by the book.

**G: Ironically, you're still wearing white makeup as The Phantom. Does it take the same amount of time to put on as KISS makeup?**

P: I have a makeup woman and it takes about 45 minutes. You have to take it off very carefully or it will tear your skin off because some of it is prosthetics and it's glued to my face. If I pull it off too quickly I not only pull it off but I wind up looking too much like The Phantom.

**G: Now that you've done one musical play, do you want to do more?**

P: There are things being offered to me. After the next KISS tour I know I will definitely do more.

**G: Is there a particular show or role you'd like to do?**

P: Not really. There's always Broadway and there are always new musicals that are being written and I'll just take it as it comes. It's nice to see that not only am I having a ball but it's also being as well received as it is.

**G: When the run ends, do you plan to take it easy before the next tour begins?**

P: Yes. I would have stayed longer with *Phantom* knowing there was this additional down time. They'd like me to stay but I think that would be impossible at this point.

**G: How do you like working in Toronto?**

P: It's an awesome city. A great place. I'm so lucky. I'm one blessed guy. Everything is just great and being here is great.

more



# PAUL STANLEY

continued

**G: Have you had time to get out and enjoy it?**

**P:** Only now, because for the weeks of rehearsal I was literally going to bed at 8:00. I was exhausted. Only now am I beginning to get out a little. My whole clan, my in-laws, everybody flew in for opening night. But for the [rehearsals] I was by myself the whole time. I never worked so hard in my life. I had nothing to give anybody.

**G: As far as the movie itself, you weren't as involved in it as Gene, right?**

**P:** No, the film was something that Gene oversaw, it was very much his baby. I read the script before and I kept out of the way. They were asking me to be involved on a few different levels, to write some new songs and what have you. But the key involvement of the band was the recreation of the '78 show.

**G: I know it was a very long day. What was it like for you?**

**P:** It was a long day, it was a lot of fun and interestingly enough, seeing the footage, I can barely distinguish it from original footage. It's a pretty good recreation. You couldn't ask for a better recreation than using the people that originally did it rather than getting somebody to dress up like that. It's very accurate and it looks good. More importantly the film itself is looking really great. I've seen about 20-25 minutes of it. I think it's important for people to realize it's not a KISS film in the sense of the Beatles' *A Hard Day's Night* or any band making a film about themselves. This is a film about four young people and their misadventures trying to get to a KISS concert after losing their tickets, having their tickets confiscated. Calling it a KISS film really sells it short because it limits the appeal of it when it really has a wide appeal. It's like *Fast Times at Ridgemont High* meets *The Wizard of Oz*.

**G: Back to the concert scene, Gene said it was harder than a show where the adrenaline carries you through, since there was so much stopping and starting.**

**P:** It certainly was a whole different animal than doing a live show. But it was a lot of fun because there was an audience there and between takes there was a lot of time to interact and kid around with the audience. Any time I can be on stage and there's an audience I'm all for it. It was a long day but it wasn't anywhere near as tough as I thought it might be.

**G: How did the new song come about?**

**P:** Basically there was a request for a new song, and when I thought about it rather than me writing something I thought I'd get together with Diane Warren. In this case, I didn't co-write the song. I sat down with her, I had a title and an idea for the song and I said to her, "You write it." I know what I can do, and Diane's such a great writer. There's always the option of rejecting it. "Nothing Can Keep Me From You" is about a pledge or a commitment to something or someone but it doesn't come from the point of weakness. It's nothing can get in the way of whatever I'm after.

**G: Did the fact that Diane wrote a #1 song for Aerosmith have anything to do with it?**

**P:** Actually not, I wrote with Diane 10 years ago. Diane has had about 40 top 10 songs which is 39 more than most people. She's always been a friend and we first got together when we were doing *Crazy Nights*. This seemed like a

great opportunity. Even though the thought at first was to co-write it, I just threw it in her lap because I know what I can do and I know what Diane can do. It's a great song and everybody's real happy.

**G: How long did it take her to write it?**

**P:** As she put it to me, she likes pressure and challenges. A day later she called me and sang me the chorus, which was great, and two or three days later she called and said, "It's done." It's great. I just wanted to see us have something that was really special and universal. The film has a really wide appeal and the song should have a really wide appeal.

**G: You re-recorded "Detroit Rock City" so you'd**



(Stanley (at last January's NATPE convention here) was shocked to hear about the passing of friend and *Psycho Circus* producer Bruce Fairbairn, who died suddenly in May. His loss to the music world, says Stanley, is eclipsed by the loss to his family. "Anything else is unimportant and minuscule," he says.

have a new version for the concert scene.

**P:** Yeah. The idea was to capture the live feel of the song, especially the way we were doing it in '78, which musically is identical to the way we're doing it now, it's just that we wanted to get the nuances and the spirit of where we were at then. I listened to my vocals and a bunch of old tracks and we would have used an old version but sonically it just doesn't measure up when it's coming through big speakers on a big screen. So we did it again. It probably took two hours start to finish. That's including getting sounds. It was a quick process.

**G: Did you give your opinion on other songs that are going in the movie?**

**P:** There are other songs besides KISS, it's not built around KISS music. It's a period piece. I was not involved in finding songs. I didn't want to be involved. It wasn't necessary. This was really Gene's baby.

There were adept people aboard to do this. When I was

asked my opinion I gave it but this was not something I was overly involved in. I have no interest in that segment of the business. There are many things that are appealing but that's not one of them.

**G: What about a solo album? Does that appeal?**

**P:** Right now there's really no time to think in terms of that. There's going to be a big KISS tour. Musically anything I would do musically would compromise KISS and right now that's where my energy is focused.

**G: Were you disappointed in the way the last U.S. run went in comparison to the reunion tour, which was so successful and had many multiple shows?**

**P:** Before the tour started I said this wasn't going to be like the last tour. When a band reunites after 20 years and people aren't sure whether or not they'll ever do it again and it's your one chance to see it everybody comes out. I never expected that this tour would be of that magnitude. I expected it to be very successful but the only way to top that tour is to have a farewell tour.

**G: But the circus performers and the 3D, all that didn't work out.**

**P:** The only thing sure in life is change. When we started trying to bring the circus indoors to arenas the safety codes and the buildings wouldn't allow it. Things looked good in theory but as soon as you try to set up a trapeze over an audience you suddenly find out you can't. Once you find out all the things you can't do with a circus the only thing you get approved is somebody juggling on a unicycle on stage and that's not exactly what we had in mind. We had to scrap it.

**G: But all in all, are you happy with the way the tour went?**

**P:** One thing that's always the same is audience response. If you do one night instead of two somewhere or two instead of four, the response is no different just because you're doing less but you're still doing more than most bands. That's important to remember. We're very lucky and we do very well.

**G: This time around I hear you're adding '80s and '90s songs to the set.**

**P:** It's for sure. We have to go with the songs that were the most popular. A show can only be so long. So playing some obscure song from the '80s is as unlikely as playing some obscure song from the

'70s. It's not in the cards. The majority of people won't appreciate it. To please a couple of diehards who want to hear something totally remote isn't fair to the majority. "Heaven's on Fire," "Lick It Up," "I Love It Loud," those are the songs that are synonymous with that period and to play "A Million to One" or "Burn Bitch Burn," what would be the point?

**G: How do Ace and Peter feel about playing those songs?**

**P:** They're actually into it. We'll be playing them faithfully. There will be no new versions of those songs. Ace was saying it will be very cool to learn Bruce's songs. The next tour is really a celebration of the entire history of the band. We've gone full circle, the original lineup is the lineup now, but having sold between 12 and 15 million albums without makeup there's no reason at this point to make believe that period never existed. At this point everyone knows this is the band and everyone's comfortable with the idea of playing those songs.

**G: There are rumors that it's a farewell tour. Will it be billed as that?**

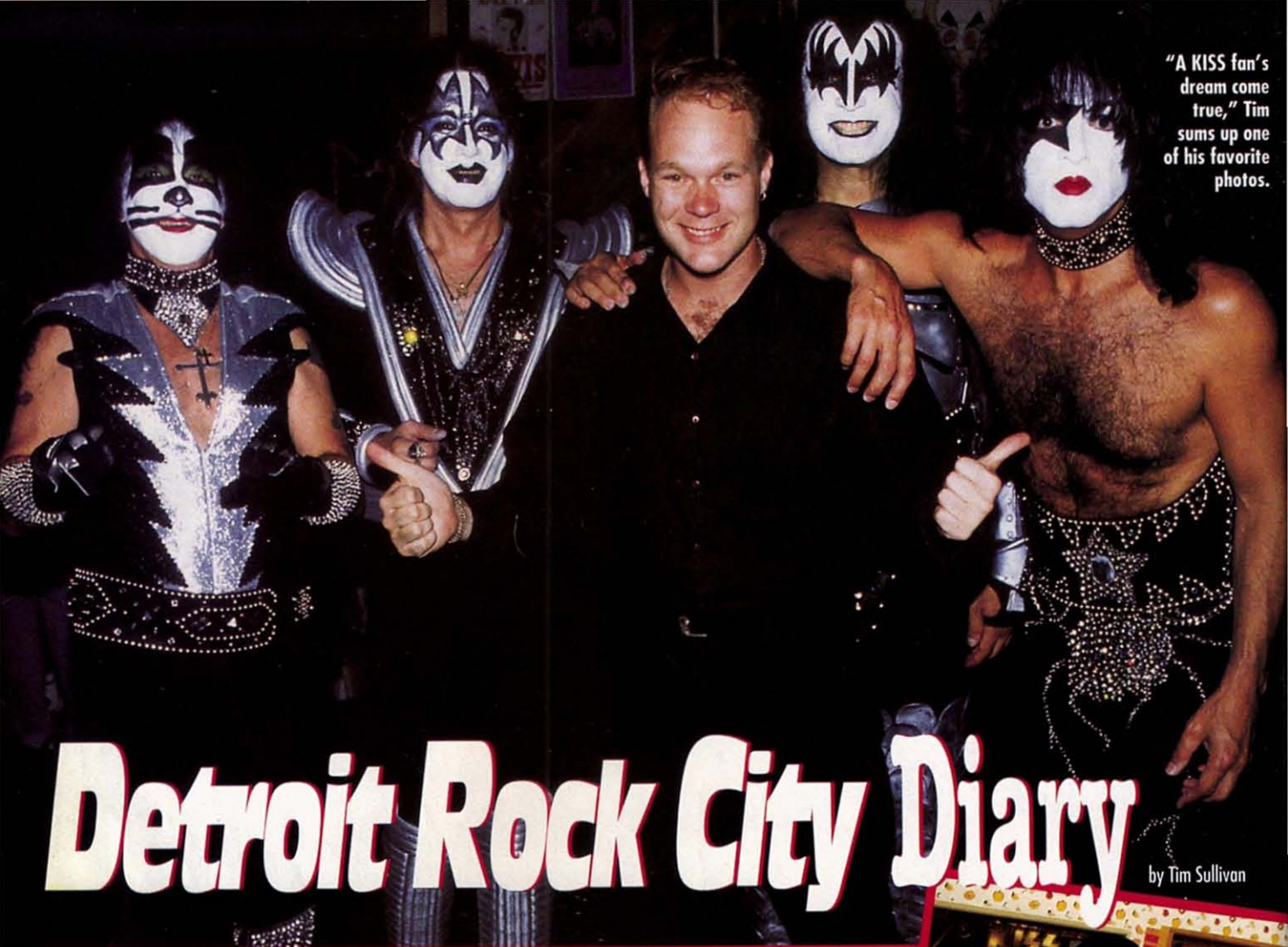
**P:** I think we should just wait till the appropriate time and we'll see. It's too early to say. If you spend too much time thinking about the future it means you're not living in the present. We'll take it as it comes. •







"A KISS fan's dream come true," Tim sums up one of his favorite photos.



# Detroit Rock City Diary

by Tim Sullivan

**T**alk about dream jobs—lifelong KISS fan Tim Sullivan not only helped to get his idols back on the screen, he was hired as the associate producer of *Detroit Rock City*, working closely with the band and participating in every facet of the production. As he tells it, it was a labor of love.

## JUNE 14, 1998

I had a feeling tonight was going to be something special when the folks at the Academy of Science Fiction and Horror asked me to arrange for Gene Simmons to be a presenter at their annual Saturn Awards. Knowing Gene's love of this film genre, it was a no-brainer getting him to present an award to *Godzilla* Producer Dean Devlin. (It made sense, too. After all, Gene is the *Godzilla* of rock 'n' roll!) Gene wasted no time working the room—or the table, which included my college buddy, Mike DeLuca, who just so happens to run New Line Cinema, the company for which I analyze and critique screenplays. Gene brought along writer/director Adam Rifkin, who is currently riding the success of *Small Soldiers* and *Mouse Hunt*, both of which he wrote. In tow is Adam's lovely lady friend, Kathleen Haase, a film producer who confides that she has been developing a KISS movie with Gene, Adam and KISS rock photographer-turned-movie producer Barry Levine. Wow! That sounds familiar. For years I've been trying to get New Line to consider making a KISS movie. Gene and I had met with DeLuca in the past, but attempts to launch a big-budget KISS superhero/sci-fi epic never got off the ground. Maybe this time it will be different...

## JUNE 15

Our dessert from the Saturn Awards still digesting, Gene

has Kathleen and Barry submit *Detroit Rock City* to New Line. I read it and am immediately blown away. As I write in my coverage, the script (written by KISS fan Carl Dupré) is one of the coolest teen comedies I have ever read. Most importantly, it's got heart and soul—not to mention an insight into teen life circa 1978 that truly hits home. Now all I've got to do is convince DeLuca that my enthusiasm has nothing to do with the fact that it's a KISS movie. (My long-standing status as a rock soldier is well known around the halls of New Line....) With studio executive Brian Witten backing me up (yet another suit weaned on KISS), I state my case. DeLuca tells me the concept of four kids on a quest to see KISS "sounds great." He tells me he will meet with Gene. The journey begins....

## JULY 29

Time has moved so quickly and yet, at times, so agonizingly slowly. Weeks of back and forth meetings and negotiations between New Line and the *DRC* folk have finally yielded the grand prize—A "green light!" New Line puts out an official press release: "Legendary rock group KISS to make American film debut in coming-of-age comedy." None of us can believe the headlines, especially me. I've been assigned the duty of Associate Producer. Never in my wildest dreams would I have imagined, as a 13 year-old sitting in the rafters of Madison Square Garden back in '77, that one day



"I felt like I was 14 again at my local 7-Eleven," says Tim, for whom *DRC*'s Smiley-Mart brought back lots of memories.

"Between takes, Jimmy [DeBello] and I challenged each other to KISS pinball. I won."

"They didn't run away to get married, but Sam and Melanie really bonded on their trip to Niagara Falls," says Tim, who chaperoned.





I'd be working side by side with the band I was just about to see!

## AUGUST 8

In what he calls his "final photo session," Barry Levine shoots KISS for the *Psycho Circus* tour program. Everyone from the film is invited, many of us meeting for the first time. It proves to be love at first sight. We all were KISS fans growing up. We all had dreams, and we all made them happen. As Gene says on the new album, "We Are One."

According to Tim, the four young actors were "nervous and in awe," when they met the fully costumed KISS for the first time backstage in Buffalo, NY at the band's *Psycho Circus* concert there.



## AUGUST 10

Our production offices have opened. Casting has begun. Eddie Furlong and Giuseppe Andrews audition. As soon as they leave the room, we all look at each other with great big smiles. We know we've found two of our four leads on the very first day. Curly!

## AUGUST 15

Gene invites me to his house for a bull session on how to best promote the film. In his private office he shows me his many files on every KISS project you could possibly imagine. The more I get to know this guy, the more I am in awe. He truly is a one-man war machine. I'd better watch out...

## AUGUST 18

And now there are three! Newcomer Jimmy DeBello auditions for the role of 'Trip' and nails it on the head. (Full of benevolent mischief, Jimmy truly is a trip.) Having just seen *Slums of Beverly Hills*, Adam is high on the film's star, Natasha Lyonne. If she is interested, Adam wants to offer her the role of 'Christine Sixteen.' Turns out she is

and accepts, calling *Detroit Rock City* the "last cool movie of the millennium."

## AUGUST 20

Yet another 'wild night' in Hollywood. We all take time off from casting to attend the *Blade* premiere. Gene brings his young son, who gets a bit scared and asks to leave halfway through. We're all left wondering: Hasn't this kid ever seen his dad spit blood in concert?

## AUGUST 23

Adam and Kathleen visit Gene's warehouse of personal KISS memorabilia, which he has agreed to let us use as props for the film. Production Designer Steve Hardie is also given the tour. One of Steve's many tasks will be to recreate the classic *Love Gun* stage for the climactic concert scene. We truly are going back in time.

## AUGUST 24

Having auditioned nearly every teen star in Hollywood, we finally find our "Jam." His name is Sam Huntington and he auditioned via videotape from his home in New Hampshire. He has just the right mixture of innocence and edge. Unfortunately, he is 16 years old, which means set teachers and shorter work hours. (All the

other guys are over 18.) Concerned about these issues, New Line asks us to keep searching...

## AUGUST 26

Adam turns in his revised draft of Carl's script. Per Brian Witten's notes, the script is even edgier and more R-rated. (Originally the main characters were 14 years old. Now they are 17-18.) Rightly so, New Line doesn't want anyone to think *DRC* will resemble anything like the campy *KISS Meets the Phantom of the Park*. With scenes such as Jam losing his virginity in a church confessional, it's a good bet they won't!

## AUGUST 27

Adam and I do sushi with Ace and Peter. It's amazing how much these guys know about movies. Ace unveils to us the new album cover while Peter talks proudly of the changes in his drum solo. (He's going to levitate over the audience!) Throughout it all, Adam and I keep kicking each other under the table. Can this really all be happening? Dinner ends and Adam is off with Kathleen to Toronto, where it has been decided the film will be shot. Barry and I remain behind for now to continue casting and prep for the concert scene, which will be shot in L.A.

## SEPTEMBER 4

Gene and Adam decide upon a list of 24 classic KISS songs that we can use in the movie. To avoid complications, the songs are those written without outside writers. One casualty is "Do You Love Me," the song to which Eddie's character originally was scripted to perform a striptease. I visit Paul at the rehearsal studio and ask him to think of a replacement. "That's easy," he

tells me. "Strutter." "Strutter" it is...

## SEPTEMBER 8

Casting continues and still no "Jam." Gene calls Jonathan Taylor Thomas personally and asks him if he would be interested. College beckons JTT, who has just quit *Home Improvement*, so the answer is no. If only they would let us hire Sam Huntington...

## SEPTEMBER 15

Though the initial idea was to use the *Alive 2* version of "Detroit Rock City"

for our concert sequence, Paul points out that the track may sound a bit tinny when pumped through today's modern THX sound systems. We all agree, and a date is set to re-record the tune. Can't wait!

## SEPTEMBER 17

Well, at least the *DRC* ladies are shaping up! Rounding out our cast now are Melanie Lynskey as Beth (yet another video audition!), Lin Shaye as Mrs. Bruce (Jam's Mom) and Shannon Tweed as Amanda. Despite what some are thinking, Shannon was *not* hired because of Gene. Plain and sim-

Thousands of flyers were handed out inviting fans to participate in the concert scene shoot in L.A., and the recipients were disappointed to find out later that filming was moved to Toronto.

NEW LINE CINEMA  
**KISS**  
WANTS YOU!!  
TO BE IN THEIR  
MOVIE!!!

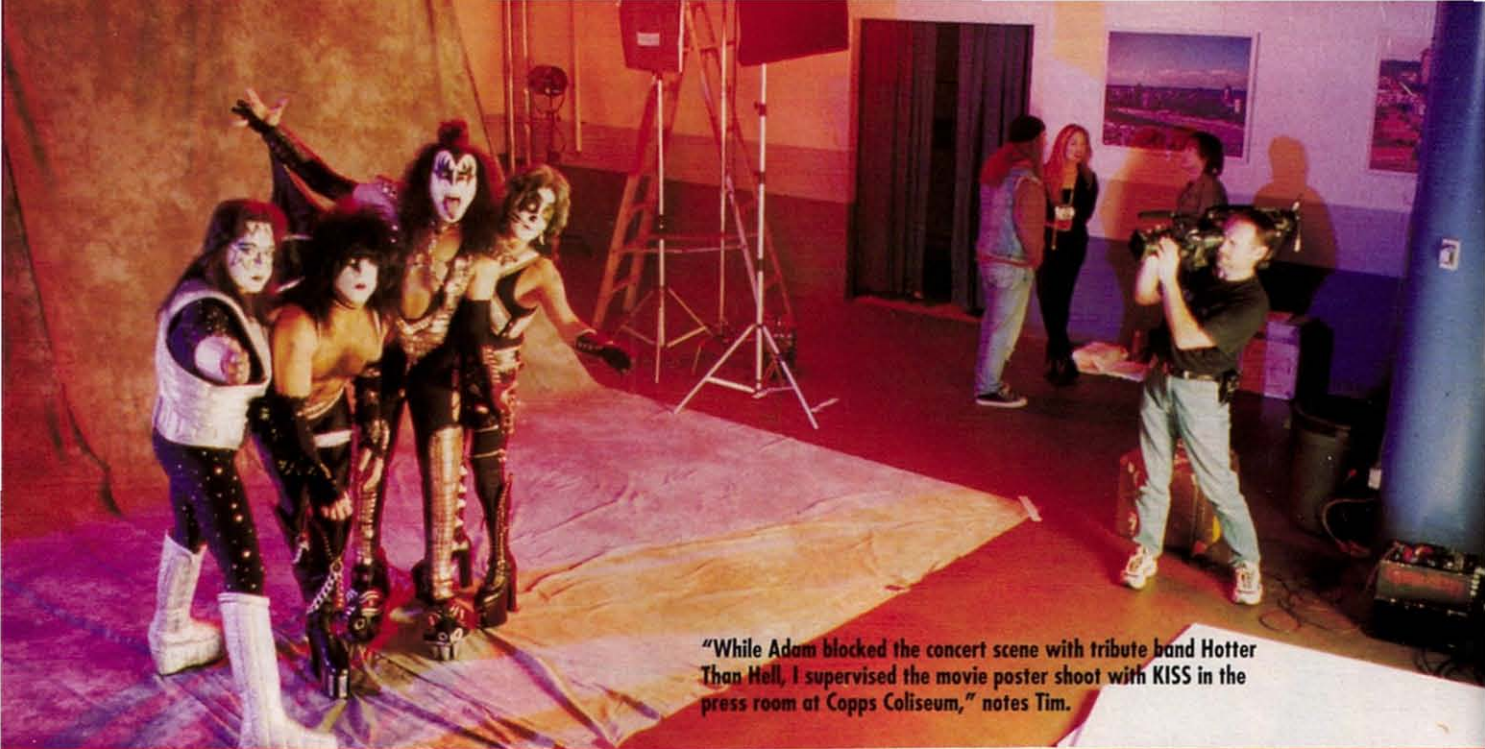
Step back into 1979 and play a member of the audience at New Line Cinema films *KISS* in a scene for the upcoming movie "Detroit Rock City".

WHEN: Thursday, December 3, 1998  
WHERE: Copps Coliseum, Hamilton  
TIME: 6:30PM - 11:30PM

To reserve your place in *KISS* STORY, call  
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or **1-877-663-6646**

**You must call to reserve a space.**  
**NO UNRESERVED ADMITTANCE!!!**  
(Confirmation/Information forms will be sent at a later date)





"While Adam blocked the concert scene with tribute band Hotter Than Hell, I supervised the movie poster shoot with KISS in the press room at Copps Coliseum," notes Tim.

ple, she's perfect for the part. I mean, what adolescent male hasn't fantasized about the sexy and smart Ms. Tweed!

#### SEPTEMBER 21

Barry and I attend the *Psycho Circus* Press Conference at Mann's Chinese Theater. Busy prepping in Toronto, Adam is unable to fly in, so he sends a life-size cardboard cut-out in his place. You gotta love this guy! I take the opportunity to invite the fans to be extras in our upcoming concert scene. The crowd goes wild over the flyers that we hand out, designed by comic book artist Brad Parker with a little help from Gene himself. (Talk about hands-on!) I remind everyone that the film takes place in 1978, so no Marilyn Manson T-shirts, please.

#### SEPTEMBER 22

Still dizzy from the euphoria of the day before, there is no resting for KISS as they step into Tone King studios to record a raw, kick-ass new version of "Detroit Rock City." I have to keep pinching myself as Paul guides the guys through the track, who all play to hard rock perfection. This should definitely shut up those who doubt the musical unity of KISS.

#### SEPTEMBER 27

The Toronto crew diligently builds sets, sews costumes and recreates vintage knickknacks in our ongoing 'journey to the past.' Cinematographer John Leonetti breaks the script down into storyboards with Adam, and meets with me in L.A. to scout the Sports Arena where the concert is set to be shot. So far the response for extras has been overwhelming, thanks to the *Metal Edge* and KISS Otaku Web sites. Fans are coming from as far away as Japan in order to be part of KISSStory, astounding the cast and crew with their enthusiasm. Gene, Barry and I take it all in stride. We knew all along that we could count on the KISS army.

#### OCTOBER 1

This has got to be one of the fastest moving projects in film history! The script only came in three months ago and in one week we'll begin filming! As of yesterday, we still don't have our Jam. Today I sit down with DeLuca and make the case again for Sam. Satisfied he truly is the best for the role, DeLuca agrees to hire him and let us work out the

schooling. I take this to heart, sending Sam a care package of books and videos courtesy of Gene. Forget math and science. It's time for some KISSStory lessons!

#### OCTOBER 3

Mystery meets KISS when Brian Witten and myself bring Eddie, Giuseppe and Jimmy to hang out with the band for the first time. Backstage at the arena where KISS is rehearsing, we share dinner and shoot the shit. Court jesters that they are, Jimmy and Ace bond instantly. Gene shines the spotlight on Eddie, praising him for his work in *American History X*. Giuseppe reveals his dad was the guitarist for the Bee Gees, impressing all. The evening ends with Paul hosting a private screening of KISS' new 3D video. As Peter hands us our glasses and the lights dim in the empty, giant stadium, it's hard, once again, to believe this is actually reality. We truly are in the *Psycho Circus*!

#### OCTOBER 4

In the 'some things never change' department, Kathleen is told by a prominent fast food chain that they will not allow us to show their product in our movie because they are "a family business and, don't you know, KISS stands for Knights In Satan's Service!" Talk about life imitating art!

#### OCTOBER 7

Along with the four guys I fly to Toronto, where they finally gather as a group for the first time. Dressed in their '70s garb and wigs (at least in Sam and Jimmy's case), they truly look exactly how we all envisioned! Brent Woods (former Vince Neil guitarist) gives the guys some quick music lessons. Only Giuseppe knows how to play, however it doesn't really matter as they will all be miming to a purposefully rough, garage version of "Rock and Roll All Nite" previously recorded by hot L.A. band The Devil Roosevelt. Later on Eddie records lead vocals for the track. Listening to his Sid Vicious-like warbling, it's hard to believe that back in his 72 days Eddie was actually a pop singing sensation in Japan!

#### OCTOBER 9

The first day of filming! In order to beat the pending winter weather as well as accommodate Natasha's schedule, we begin a week and a half of outdoor photography involving

the scenes between our four heavy metal heroes and their disco foes. The on-screen chemistry is magic, as if the guys have been friends forever. Off-screen it's a little different. Eddie and Jimmy can usually be found in their trailers playing Nintendo. Giuseppe pretty much keeps to himself, curling up with an intense foreign film or book. Sam spends most of his 'free' time being tutored, always under the watchful eye of his super cool mom, Chris.

#### OCTOBER 15

Back in L.A., I focus on coordinating the pending concert scene. The film rushes from Toronto arrive daily and they look great. It's really exciting to see the words of the script taking shape on the screen. As a KISS fan, I tell Adam that I wouldn't want anybody else directing the KISS movie.

#### OCTOBER 22

Having shot the scene where Giuseppe rescues her from slimy car thieves, Natasha completes her work on *DRC*. All agree she's brought a certain edge to the film, and it's tough to see her go. Eddie seems particularly sad. Word has it the two got along quite well...

#### OCTOBER 26

The Toronto crew continues to endure many cold nights of filming from dusk till dawn. Thousands of Canadian KISS fans show up for the "Cobo Hall" exterior crowd scenes. It's tough to entice them to stick around, however KISS does just that, graciously donating tons of autographed goodies as well as a grand prize trip to L.A. to meet them.

#### OCTOBER 27

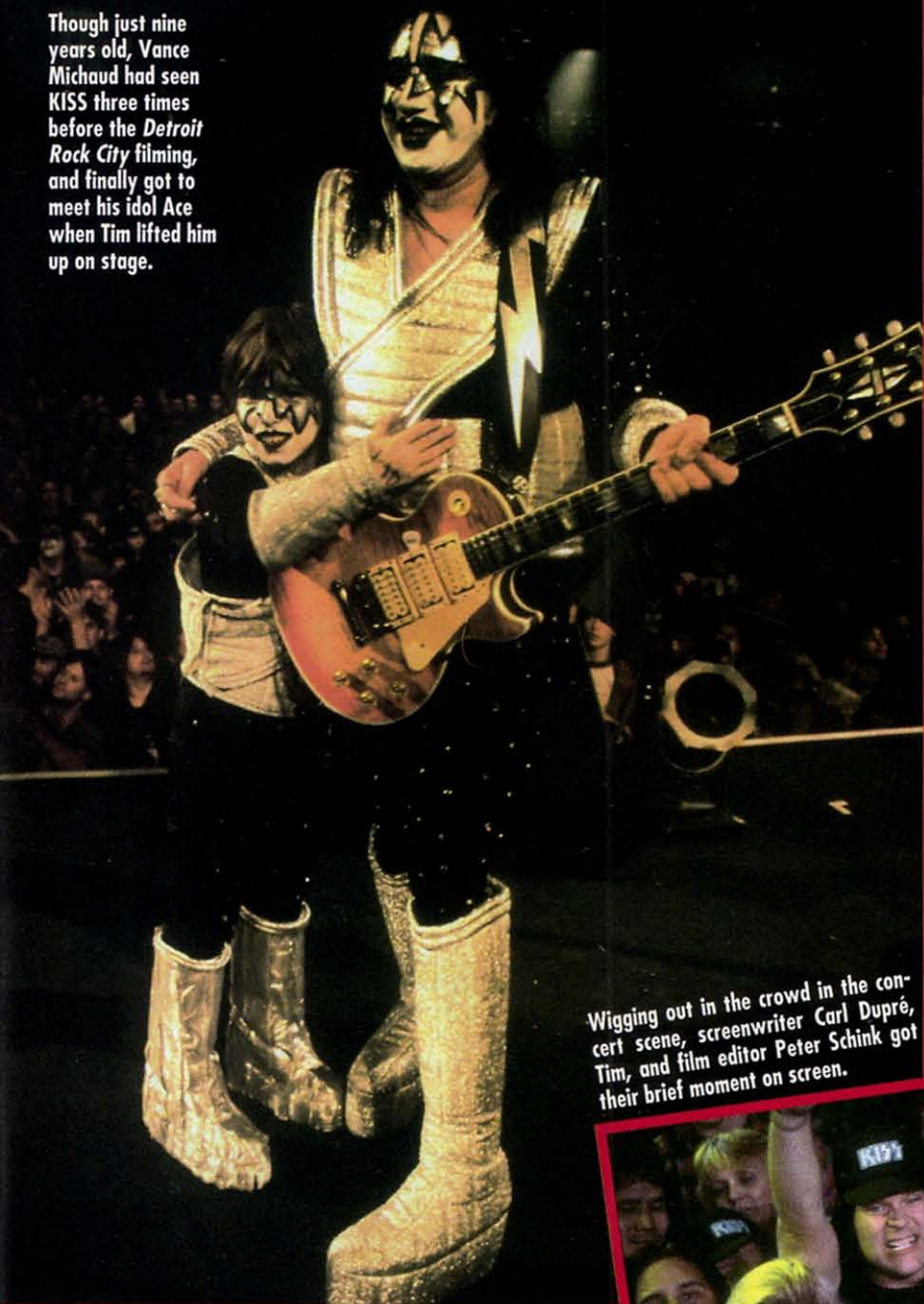
Eddie flies to LA to attend the *American History X* premiere where I introduce him to Shannon. Gene jokingly warns Eddie that he better nail his upcoming love scene with her in one take. Back in Toronto, Paul's wife, Pamela Bowen, nails her scene in one take. In a hilarious cameo as one of the "Mothers Against The Music Of KISS," she ad libs a speech completely denouncing the "Star Child."

#### OCTOBER 30

After KISS announces they will perform in Toronto, it is decided to shoot the pending concert scene there as well. This means calling off the L.A. date, which means I have the



Though just nine years old, Vance Michaud had seen KISS three times before the *Detroit Rock City* filming, and finally got to meet his idol Ace when Tim lifted him up on stage.



Wiggling out in the crowd in the concert scene, screenwriter Carl Dupré, Tim, and film editor Peter Schink got their brief moment on screen.

unenviable task of phoning 5000 die-hard fans and basically telling them that KISSmas has been canceled!

#### OCTOBER 31

Halloween! KISS! Dodger Stadium! As they happen to be in L.A., both Natasha and Melanie are able to attend. The girls both love the show, especially Melanie who gets all teary-eyed when Peter sings "Beth."

#### NOVEMBER 6

I fly in to Toronto for the rest of the shoot, just in time for Day 20, our halfway point. Time really does fly when you're having fun. And fun this truly is. The production office reminds me of Santa's workshop with everyone resembling a team of elves working hard to recreate KISS mania. Despite the grueling hours and challenges, it's all a labor of love.

#### NOVEMBER 10

The normally shy Eddie finally lets loose with his big dance scene.

*Entertainment Tonight* captures it all on video as Eddie strips to his KISS boxers. The female extras go wild for real, prompting Eddie to tell reporters he's considering a job offer from Chippendale's.

#### NOVEMBER 13

Giuseppe shoots his big moment—a chase through the backstage area of a KISS concert. Bikini babes abound as Giuseppe refuses a stunt double and performs his own stunt, a slide down an escalator railing.

#### NOVEMBER 17

For the last three days and next four we are camped out at the local High School, filming all our school stuff. Classes remain in session, and we must shoot our scenes between bells. At first the students' curiosity distracts our actors, but eventually everyone gets used to each other.

#### NOVEMBER 19

Like a scene from the movie, Sam stays behind after his mom refuses to let him join Eddie, Jimmy and Giuseppe at the Marilyn Manson concert. This provides just the right motivation for the scene where Lin, his movie mom, burns the KISS tickets!

#### NOVEMBER 21

Last day of High School. In between shooting scenes where they are chased through the halls by Miles Dougal (absolutely hysterical as Elvis the Security Guard), the guys pose for our awesome set photographer Chris Helcerman-Benge in a series of shots to be used for the movie poster. The rebellious nature of their characters seems to have gotten the better of them. Goofing off, they crack each other up, driving the genteel Chris crazy but making for some truly cool rock 'n' roll poses!

#### NOVEMBER 23

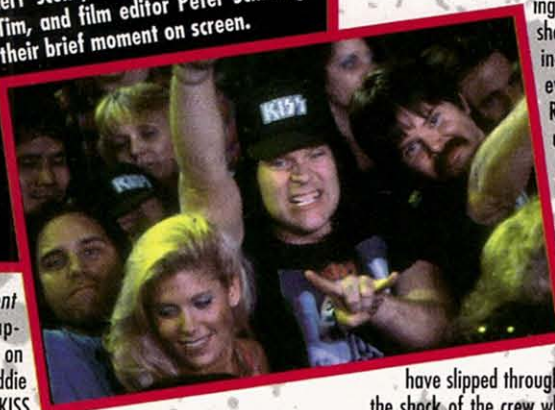
Finally, a day off! I take Sam and Melanie to Niagara Falls where we tour the falls as well as the Haunted House attractions. The two of them are absolutely adorable. By the time we head back they have truly bonded, ensuring their on-screen romance will be completely believable.

#### NOVEMBER 26

Being that we are in Canada, you'd never know it was Thanksgiving. Instead of turkey we get chicken, working the entire holiday as Jimmy films the hold-up scene at the convenience store. Maybe it's the home-sickness we all are feeling, but when Jimmy has to cry on camera, the whole crew gets choked up.

#### NOVEMBER 29

Gene arranges to bus the cast and crew to Buffalo to see the band in concert. Awestruck, we take over the entire 5th row. Pete Schink, the film's editor, and I rock out like we're 13 years old again. Sam keeps staring at us, later confessing how Adam told him that's how he should act when we film the upcoming concert scene! Highlight of the evening: Paul dedicating "Detroit Rock City" to Adam and the rest of us!



#### DECEMBER 1

The boys perform "Rock and Roll All Nite" on a set crammed with KISS memorabilia. Despite the excellent job of the art department, some KISS posters from the *Dynasty* and *Elder* eras

have slipped through. Adam and I tear them down to the shock of the crew who think we're over-attentive to detail, but better theirs than the wrath of KISS fans!

#### DECEMBER 2

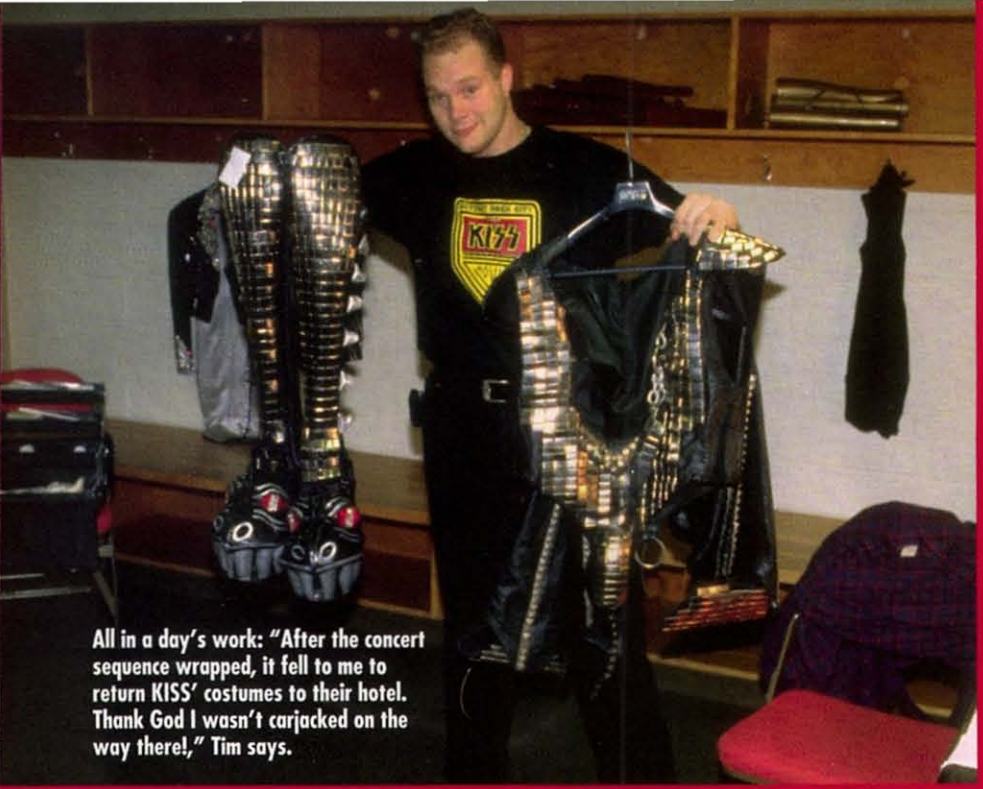
The night before KISSmas. Tomorrow is the day we've been waiting for—A recreation of the '78 *Love Gun* concert! I leave a message with Gene regarding the costumes. Never ceasing to amaze me, he calls me on his cell phone from backstage at a show during Peter's drum solo!

#### DECEMBER 3

Just as the kids in our script have been on their journey to KISS, so have we all. Now, with three days left of shooting, we finally come to the "money shot." This is our climax, our grand finale. Like KISS themselves, it must be larger than life, a romanticized version of the real thing.

6 AM: I show up in the cold, cold dark of morning along





**All in a day's work:** "After the concert sequence wrapped, it fell to me to return KISS' costumes to their hotel. Thank God I wasn't carjacked on the way there!" Tim says.

with the crew to make sure everything is ready for the arrival of KISS. An entire section of Copps Coliseum (where we are filming) has been roped off and dubbed KISSLAND. This is where the costumes and make-up kits lie in wait.

10 AM: I hear the familiar voice of tour manager Tommy Thayer. The band has entered the building! Obviously tired from their show the night before, they have nonetheless arrived promptly. (Quite an achievement for Ace!) Gene winks at me with his usual greeting ("Tim Sullivan, you're a powerful and attractive man...") and asks me to show the guys around. With the arena still in darkness, I use a flashlight to guide them into the hall. Suddenly, the house lights power on, illuminating the inch-by-inch perfectly recreated Love Gun concert stage. A chill runs up and down my spine as I watch Gene, Paul, Ace and Peter see for the first time the incredible job that Steve Hardie has done. The nostalgic joy in their eyes is obvious. This is a very special moment.

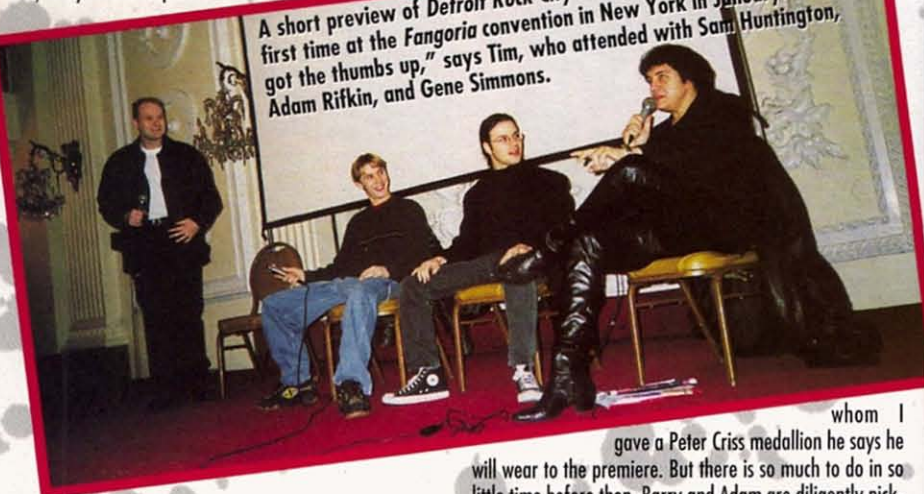
12 PM: Behind closed doors, the band has been busy turning back time. Their costumes from the reunion tour have been 'dusted off' by their wardrobe girl, who helps them get ready. Peter will be wearing hair extensions with a touch of gray to match his '78 look, and Ace has been advised to drop the blue eyeliner as he didn't start wearing it till '79—another detail I've come up with that the crew kids me about.

1PM: Completely costumed, the band stalks into the press area ready for action. A lump forms in my throat. They look exactly like they did the first time I saw them 20 years ago! When the cameras start flashing for the movie poster photo shoot, even Barry Levine can't help himself and picks up a lens. Talk about déjà vu...KISS is soon joined by Mystery and a grand time is had by all as the classic poses are struck, the 'young ones' looking on in awe as they are shown by the champs how it's done.

3PM: KISS re-enters the arena, where Adam is blocking the action with KISS tribute band Hotter Than Hell. It's a surreal moment as KISS, sitting in director's chairs, watches their counterparts go through the motions. Afterwards, Paul slyly tells Adam, "I think we've got it."

5PM: The fans have arrived in droves. In assembly-line progression, they have all been outfitted in wigs and vintage clothing. The mood is exuberant if a bit impatient as they wait for the shoot to begin. Suddenly, KISS takes the stage

and a thunderous roar goes up. Our harried assistant director tries to calm everyone down, but no one listens till Paul takes the mike. "Hello Hamilton!" he shouts. "Are you ready to rock?" With that, Adam calls "Action!" The wonderfully familiar opening chords of "Detroit Rock City" begin, sounding like an old friend. As smoke bombs explode and fireballs erupt, KISS descends from the rafters like gods from above. It's truly a sight to behold. For five glorious minutes, everyone is transported



to Cobo Hall, 1978. Pure movie magic.

8PM: For three hours KISS have proven tireless, performing "Detroit Rock City" nearly a dozen times as the cameras film them from different angles on each take. In between takes they give autographs and pose for pictures. The crowd can't get enough, and KISS can't stop giving it to them. A high-light occurs when I pull a little boy onto stage who is dressed exactly like Ace. His eyes welling with tears, the boy wraps his arms around his hero the same way a child would embrace Mickey Mouse at Disneyland. This genuine expression of love receives thunderous applause from the crowd. The boy speaks for us all.

10PM: Now that we've shot the entire group it's time to go for the close-ups. Paul breaks his guitar and extends it to the audience. An extra runs off with it though he's been

ordered to give it back. Ace's smoke bomb fails to work the first time, but on the second take the cameras capture it all in fluid slow motion. Peter has his big moment when he tosses his drumstick into the crowd. Sam is meant to catch it, which he does every time! Gene breathes fire and spits blood on cue. When the last crimson drop hits the stage, KISS is done for the day. Everyone hugs good-bye, thanking the band for their consummate performance. But we're not done yet...

11PM: We still need to shoot the crowd reactions. Decked out in wigs and 20 year-old KISS concert tees, film editor Pete Schink, writer Carl Dupré and myself stand behind Eddie, Sam, Jimmy and Giuseppe for our cameos. When Adam joins us for a moment to give directions, the impact of the four of us standing together truly hits home: Hawk, Jam, Trip and Lex are us. *Detroit Rock City* is our story just like it is of anyone who has ever had a passion, a dream, and a need to rebel against conformity and the mundane. KISS represented that dream to us 20 years ago, and now, with our dreams having come true working side by side with KISS on this movie, the message couldn't be any clearer: you gotta believe, 'cause anything's possible.

#### POSTSCRIPT: JANUARY 25, 1999

Back in L.A., with the winter rains beating outside my window, the whole experience seems like some crazy dream. Post-production hits the reality home, however, as we are knee deep in trying to get the film ready for the February 8th test screening. We have wrapped in Toronto, the last day of shooting being quite sad. For their dedicated performances, Eddie, Sam, Jimmy and Giuseppe were made official rock soldiers and were all given KISS ARMY leather jackets courtesy of Gene and the band. If they weren't major KISS fans before, they certainly are now—particularly Sam, to

whom I gave a Peter Criss medallion he says he will wear to the premiere. But there is so much to do in so little time before then. Barry and Adam are diligently picking the classic rock songs that will provide the groovin' backdrop to the film. (30% will be KISS, 70% other bands.) Kathleen continues to oversee all the production costs, balancing creativity with finance. I track the promotion and publicity, along with any other little situation that might possibly slip through the cracks. There's the Fangoria convention in New York where Gene, Adam, Sam and I successfully show footage for the very first time. Voice-over dubbing. Sound mixing. A music video. And of course, a brand new KISS song written especially for the movie by Diane Warren, "Nothing Can Keep Me From You." Soon, our job will be done it's up to the New Line Marketing and Publicity wizards to spread the word. Whatever happens, this truly has been the best time of my life. •



# SINGER KULICK CORABI COCHRAN

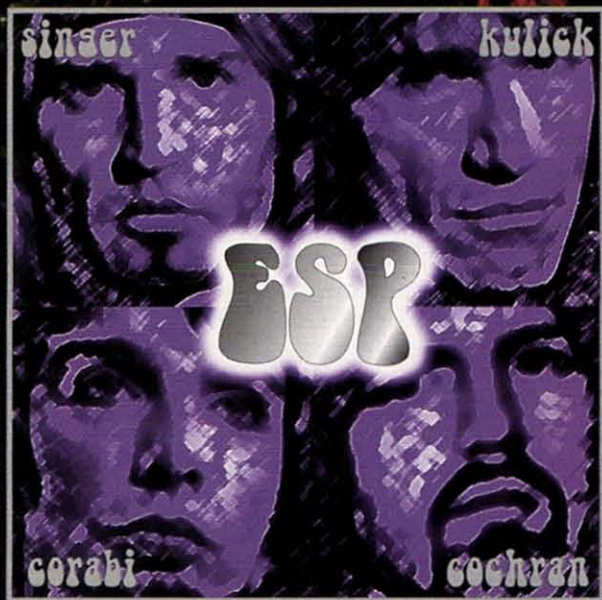
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## IN STORES EVERYWHERE!



# The WRITE Stuff:

# CARL DUPRÉ TELLS HOW DETROIT ROCK CITY WENT FROM SCRIPT TO SCREEN

by Gerri Miller

■ Screenwriter Carl Dupré has vivid memories of the day the big KISS concert scene was shot for *Detroit Rock City*. He and film editor Peter Schink "were standing there in awe. I felt like a kid in a candy store. I couldn't have imagined for a moment the feeling of having something that I had written being shot right there...it was very surreal, very magical. I felt like I had gone through the looking glass." But the journey to that very satisfying point was a long, and often exasperating one, Dupré reveals.

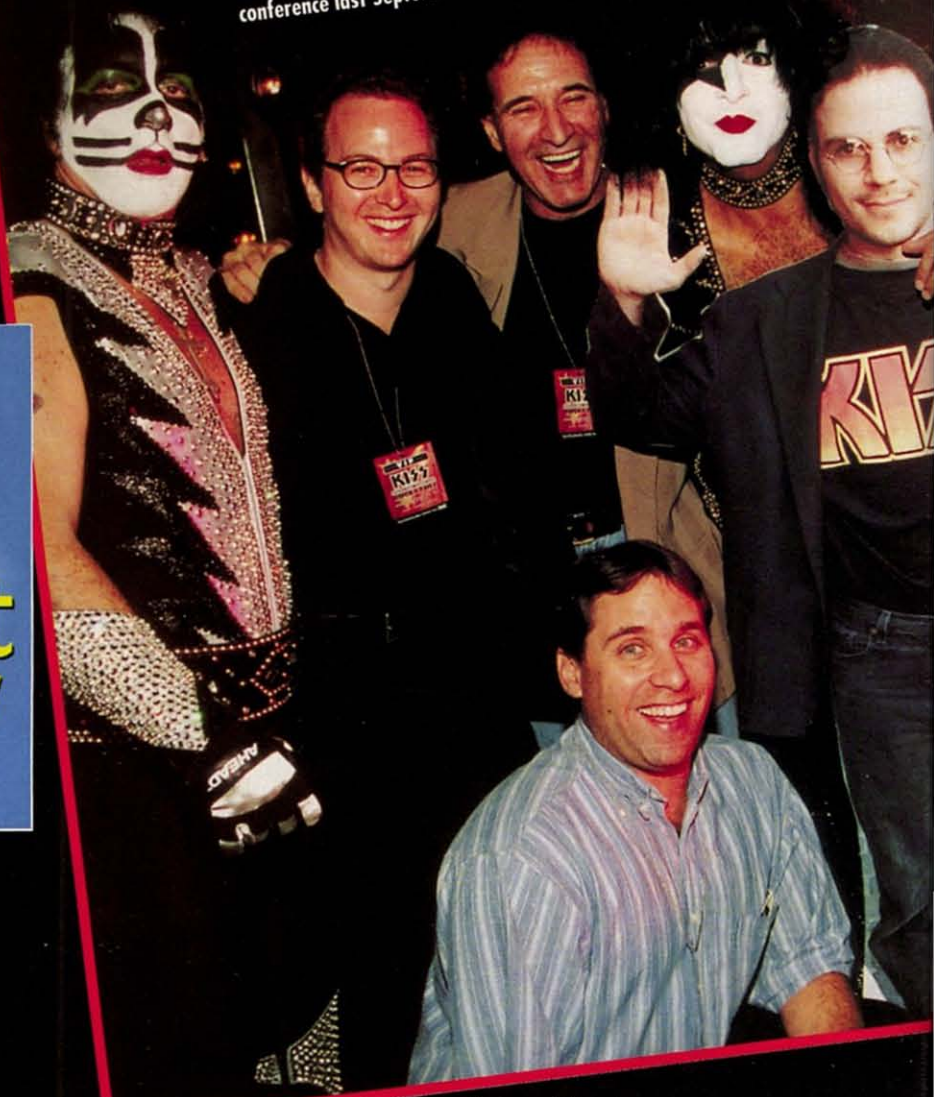
It begins back in 1992, when Dupré arrived in L.A.

from Providence, Rhode Island, where he'd studied film production and worked editing videotapes, and landed a job as an assistant to Peter Schink. The two quickly found out that they shared a major interest in KISS. "I was a huge fan, and they had a huge impact on my life," Dupré relates. "I first saw them when the script takes place, 1978, at the Providence Civic Center, and I followed them thereafter. But this guy had all the toys, a KISS pinball machine, above and beyond anyone I'd met before. We'd talk about what a rush it was when we were in our teens, the phenomenon of seeing KISS. We would talk about buying tickets to a KISS concert, counting down the days, and everything leading up to it."

A conversation about the movie *I Want to Hold Your Hand*, one of his favorites, prompted Dupré to remark, "Somebody should make a movie like that about KISS," and Schink encouraged him to write it himself. "Film production was my bread and butter but I was always writing on the side," he explains. "I was never able to complete anything, never got beyond page five or six." So he got to work on a draft that was "completely different from what it is now. It was kind of inspired by Quentin Tarantino, kind of like *Pulp Fiction* where it began at the end—it wasn't linear. I worked on that for about three months and thought it was really horrible. So I stopped."

"KISS  
had a  
huge  
impact  
on my  
life."

Dupré (lower left) joined KISS and New Line's Brian Witten, producer Barry Levine, New Line's Steve Elzer, associate producer Tim Sullivan, and a cutout of absent director Adam Rifkin at the *Psycho Circus* press conference last September in Hollywood.



the story and characters.

But interest from a potential director got him started again. "I had given up on it at that point, I hadn't even thought about it. Suddenly I had two months to turn in a script. It focused me, absolutely." He rented some "journey" movies "to see what worked about them and what touched me," and thought about his own '70s memories and anecdotes from Schink as he was formulating

"Usually when I start writing I know the ending, but in this case I didn't," Dupré says. "Do they go to the concert right away? Do they get there halfway through? But as I was writing it, it became more and more about them getting to the concert. That first version I wrote took place mostly in the KISS concert but when I started again, they were on the road trying to get to the concert. The second rewrite was more about the fans, but you see and feel



KISS' presence all along the way." He finished the script in April 1995, but came to the realization that he had no connection whatsoever to KISS. And worse, what if he did manage to get the script to KISS and they didn't like it? So the script sat on the shelf for a year.

Dupré turned his attention to other ideas. "I'd write a script every six months but I wasn't sell-

was a very strange set of coincidences."

Armed with the band's approval and verbal endorsement, "Barry took it everywhere for a year and a half. At that point in time KISS had so much going on so it was up to Barry to find people who were interested in making it.

It got a little bit of interest at the Fox movie of the week division," where another idea for a KISS movie had been floating around with a different story. But Fox folded that division, and no film studios were biting. "I thought the script was dead. It had been all over town. I learned a lot about the way things worked in Hollywood and I chalked it up to experience," Dupré sighs. But Levine didn't give up. He

The four main characters, he notes, are "all parts of the same person. They're also amalgamations of kids I knew and hung out with back in junior high. I put them together in a certain way, mixing the key ingredients. They're four parts of a whole." But of the quartet, Dupré identifies most with Jam. "My mom took me to a KISS concert so she wasn't like Jam's mom, but the type of person he is emotionally is what I relate to. I've been told I'm hypersensitive," he admits. "Hawk is the guy I fantasized about being, and Lex and Trip are two sides of the same coin: Trip doesn't worry about things, and Lex is the opposite."

He was quite pleased with the actors cast in the roles and how close they came to his vision. "Jam looked exactly like I had pictured him, it was creepy. Trip resembled what I had in my head, but the other two guys, while they didn't look like I'd pictured them, I thought that they captured the characters really well, even went one better," says Dupré, who had originally written the boys a few years younger but had no problem with the change. "The things they changed were minute, and if they changed anything it was to bring out something that wasn't on the page or to make something that was funny hilarious, which was a vast improvement." Even so, Dupré had seen several scenes and was "shocked how close they stuck to the script."

Now writing full-time, Dupré recently co-wrote *Prophecy III*, the third installment of the Christopher Walken series for direct-to-video release, and is working on a romantic comedy script called *Younger and Younger*. Thanks to *Detroit Rock City*, he's gotten more interest in his other scripts. In fact, Gene Simmons asked him if he had "any other scripts collecting dust on the shelf. He's shown a bit of interest in other things I've done, particularly one called *Catacombs*, an action adventure," Dupré notes.

While he tends to "look at things with a slightly comedic edge and always find myself going back to comedy no matter what I write," when Dupré finishes a light-hearted script he usually wants to "do something on the other side of the spectrum, something I haven't done before." Nevertheless, there has been talk about a *Detroit Rock City* sequel. At the movie's wrap party, "We kicked around some ideas," he says, adding that he'd be "absolutely" interested in writing the script, which might follow the further adventures of the four friends.

In the meantime, Dupré has another project that could soon go before the cameras. Based on a script he co-wrote, *Broke Even*, which will star Kevin Corrigan, is "about a bunch of compulsive gamblers who come to desperate ends." But it won't be quite as personal as *Detroit Rock City*. "KISS were there at the right time in my life," he explains. "When you're 13 years old you're going through a lot of stuff you can't talk to people about. You can't talk about it with other kids because they don't understand it either and you're afraid to talk about it to adults. KISS' music said to me that it's OK, 'You're going through what everyone else is going through.' They got me through a really difficult year in my life in terms of teenage anxiety. KISS was the soundtrack to adolescence." •



ing anything. I got a job on a show called *Bone Chillers* for ABC which Adam Rifkin executive produced—my bread and butter was the film editing work, which was supporting my writing habit. Adam vaguely knew about the script because he worked with Peter Schink, but he was busy with other stuff. "Fast forward to late summer '96, a full year after the script had been written," outlines Dupré, who, through a series of introductions and pass-along recommendations, got the script to former photographer Barry Levine (who'd come out of retirement to shoot KISS for the reunion tour), KISS manager Doc McGhee, and ultimately, Gene Simmons. "It

showed it to Kathleen Haase, who showed it to Adam Rifkin—who remembered hearing about it from Peter Schink. "It was perfect timing, because Adam was looking for something to do and he attached himself to it."

Meanwhile, New Line Cinema, which had briefly considered a big-budget KISS movie Gene Simmons had pitched, was interested in finding another KISS project. Fortunately, the script landed in the lap of KISS fan Tim Sullivan, then a script reader for the company who had no trouble interesting his bosses Brian Witten and Michael DeLuca, who shared his affinity for the band. "They were of the same mind as Pete and Adam and I were. They related to it and totally got the story," says Dupré.

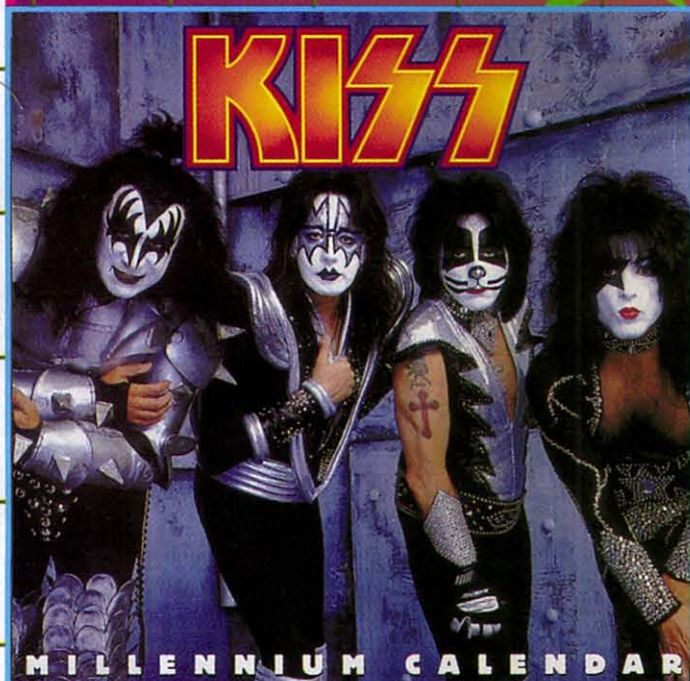


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## THE DIRECT APPROACH:

"Knock on wood, the problems have been minimal. The movie has really come together well," says Rifkin, behind the camera here.

by Gerri Miller

As a kid growing up in Chicago, Adam Rifkin idolized KISS and dreamed of making movies. The fact that he directed a KISS movie is one of those dream come true things he's still pinching himself over several months after shooting wrapped and as the film is about to hit theaters. "It's really exciting," he says. "It's exactly the reason that I wanted to be a filmmaker, to make fun movies like this that I relate to and believe other people will relate to as well." We talked about his *Detroit Rock City* experience for the first time in January, while he was supervising the editing of the movie and again in April, during the final sound mixing on the film.

**G: Now that it's done—the shooting at least—how do you feel it went? Take me through the process.**

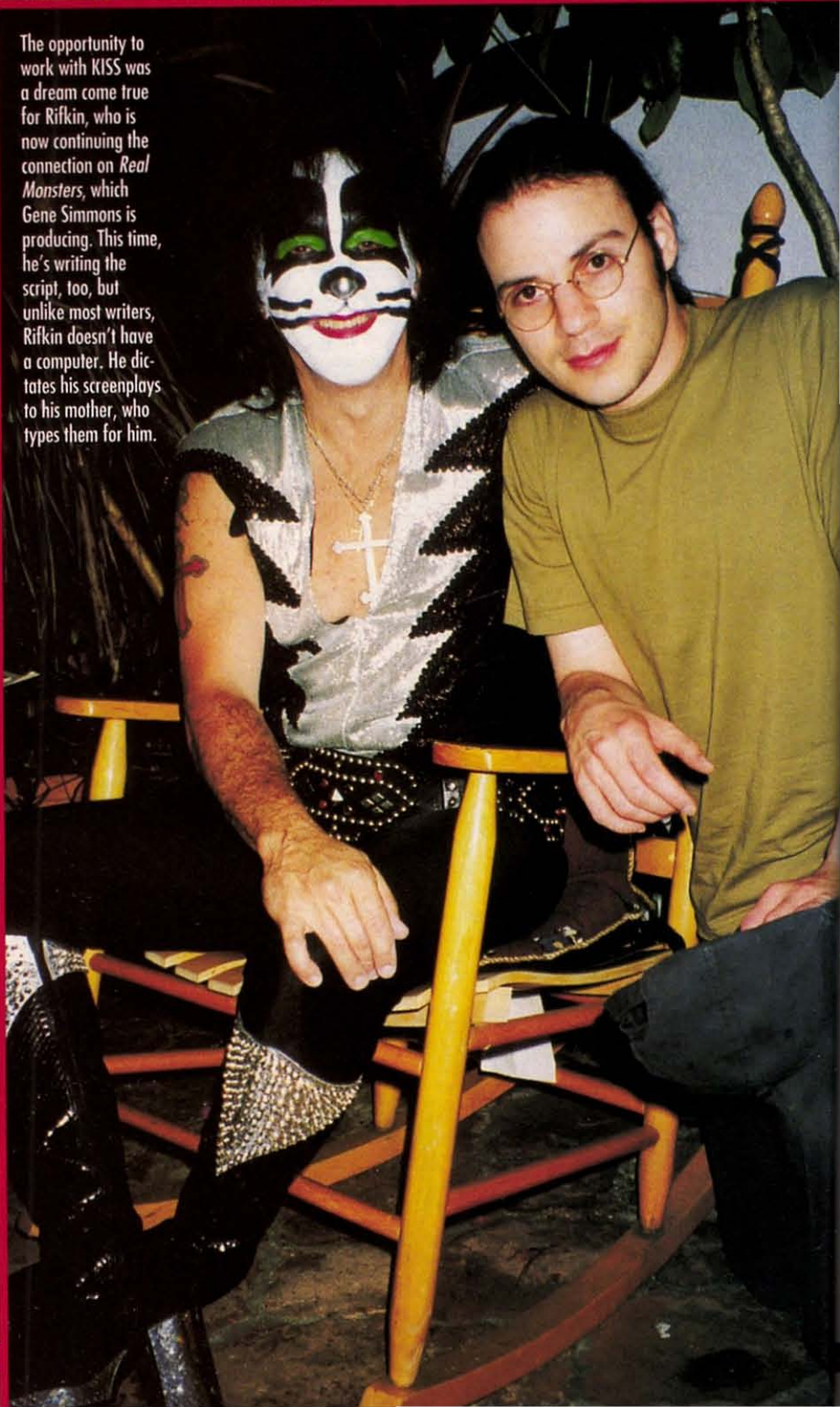
**A:** I'm really happy with the way it all went. It all came together so well. It all fell into place. It's bizarre because never before have I experienced a movie greenlit this fast, going into production this fast, and being released this fast. From our first meeting at New Line on June 29 last year, it's 13½ months to the release.

**G: Pretty fast. Was that more difficult?**

**A:** Well, movies, when everything is going really right, they're still hard to do. There are so many factors. Making a movie would be a hell of a lot easier if you didn't care how it turned out, but everyone involved in this movie cared so much. It's such a personal project for everybody. There are so many KISS fans involved in making this movie, myself included of course, and in addition the people who aren't necessarily huge KISS fans grew up in the '70s and are big music fans. It really tapped into everyone's personal...we all can relate to and are taken back to a certain time in our lives as a result of this movie. It taps into some chord and I'm hoping it translates to the audience. 14, 15, 16 year-olds will relate to it because it's about 14, 15, 16 year-olds, and 35 year-olds and up will relate to it because it's nostalgic and it makes them feel young

## A Conversation With ADAM RIFKIN

The opportunity to work with KISS was a dream come true for Rifkin, who is now continuing the connection on *Real Monsters*, which Gene Simmons is producing. This time, he's writing the script, too, but unlike most writers, Rifkin doesn't have a computer. He dictates his screenplays to his mother, who types them for him.





again. I'm hoping it will cross all age boundaries.

**G: You shot in Toronto. Why there?**

**A:** We decided to shoot in Toronto for a number of reasons, economics being a big one. Also, they have really good crews there. At one point we thought about shooting in Detroit but it was cost-prohibitive, as was Chicago, as was Los Angeles. Toronto offered us all the locations we needed for the best price.

**G: On the other hand, you had to deal with the cold.**

**A:** That wasn't the good part.

**G: What about the Canadian content rule? Did that limit your use of non-Canadian personnel?**

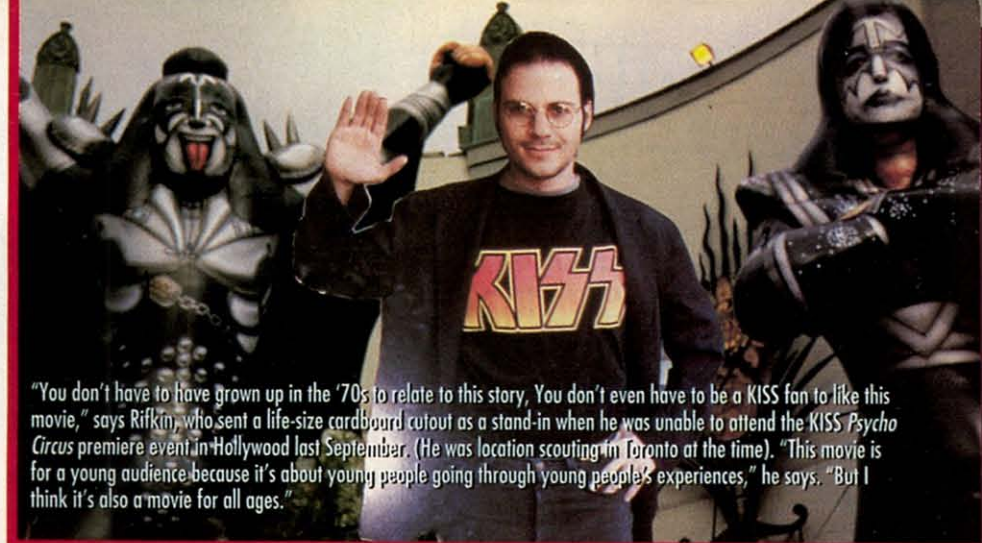
**A:** We had to have a certain number of people in it from Canada and we could only bring a certain number of crew people from the U.S. There are gives and takes. Most of the character parts were played by Canadians and played brilliantly. Canadians played the priest, the guy who robs the Smiley-Mart—many secondary and supporting characters. The crew was predominantly Canadian and they were phenomenal.

**G: What were the biggest challenges you faced on the shoot?**

**A:** One of the things that I like to do when I'm making a movie is really prepare every shot. I do a lot of storyboarding. But this movie went so fast that there just wasn't time. A lot of this movie was captured by intuition more than pre-planning.

**G: Was that a problem?**

**A:** In a way it actually worked better for this movie than I ever would have anticipated. It was way more spontaneous. As a result of everyone just sort of jumping into the fire without knowing really what to expect, there was a tremendous amount of energy and excitement and spontaneity that arose that would have been diffused to a certain degree had we stopped to prepare everything so meticulously. Still, every day was a new challenge because there was not one easy day on this movie. Even though it's New Line, which is a big studio, and it's a big release, this movie was made on a rock 'n' roll budget. It's in the \$15 million dollar range and for a studio movie that's a really low budget. One of the places there's compromise when you're working with a smaller budget is the



"You don't have to have grown up in the '70s to relate to this story. You don't even have to be a KISS fan to like this movie," says Rifkin, who sent a life-size cardboard cutout as a stand-in when he was unable to attend the KISS Psycho Circus premiere event in Hollywood last September. (He was location scouting in Toronto at the time). "This movie is for a young audience, because it's about young people going through young people's experiences," he says. "But I think it's also a movie for all ages."

amount of days you have to shoot. We were working longer days and we were packing in more into the days. We were doing so many setups and scenes in a day that literally by the end of the day you'd have forgotten what you started out with. There were never any light, easy days. Every day was packing everything in to the gills, which also made for a great deal of spontaneity and excitement. There was no time to second guess. That's not to say that we didn't do the amount of takes that we needed to get it right. We shot about 550,000 feet of film, which is a lot. If we'd had time to storyboard, we'd know exactly what shots we needed and only shoot those shots and be able to get the scene shot in a more economical way. We didn't so we had to cover ourselves. But it all added to this great rock 'n' roll spirit that I believe translates to the screen.

**G: What was the hardest day to shoot? The concert scene?**

**A:** Yes. Every day was hard, but by far the most intense day I've had on any set on any movie I've ever made was shooting that concert scene, for a few different factors. We had one day to shoot the finale of the film. KISS' schedule was so tight. They played a concert the night before and had one the next night. We had them for one day and one day only. And if we missed it, we were f.cked. If we missed it we'd have had to rewrite the ending of the movie. It wasn't like we had another day to shoot it. We had 8000 or 9000 extras showing up to see

KISS that day and if we fumbled that ball we were screwed.

**G: Could you sleep the night before?**

**A:** Of course not! The pressure was definitely on. We had five cameras. They were in different spots each time we ran through the song. Several days prior, Steve Hardie, our production designer, and his crew were constructing the set to the specifics of the original Love Gun stage.

**G: How close?**

**A:** Well, there was a little movie magic. On the real stage those steps light up, you can walk on them.

**G: And these are just for show.**

**A:** Exactly, but it looks great. [Unlike] a stage for a rock 'n' roll show that has to travel the country for two years, it doesn't matter how practical it is; it just has to look right. We all walked out on the stage and it blew us away because it was just like we remembered. So we got there pretty early, we were going to start shooting it around noon. But of course we didn't start shooting till about four. KISS got there around the time we arrived, around noon or one. If there was one day that we planned, this was it. I likened pulling this day off to what it must be like to pull off a bank heist. We had a certain number of hours to get everything we needed, we had to get in and get out. At the outset we knew we were going to lose KISS at 10 PM, but they ended up staying till one in the morning. We didn't know they were going to. They were so cool and so cooperative. They stayed till the last shot. But anyway, we made floor plans of the stage and the arena. Each take we diagrammed where we were gonna put the five cameras. There was no time to waste. Every time we'd run through the song we'd have to reload every camera and there'd be down time, and also there'd be down time reloading the pyro, which takes a half-hour. So we decided that in each set up we'd do one take with pyro and one without just to get additional coverage. The clock was ticking and I was getting really nervous, and the extras were showing up en masse.

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"I'm recreating my youth in making this movie," says Rifkin, with DRC's young stars here as they recorded vocals heard when Mystery performs "Rock And Roll All Nite" on screen. His favorite KISS songs? "Love Gun" and "King of the Night Time World."





# ADAM RIFKIN

continued

Finally we were ready to shoot the first take, we had monitors off to the side, and the electricity in the air was really powerful. I got up on stage and told the extras not to hold back. I knew they weren't going to but I wanted an excuse to get on stage so that I could announce the band. I told them to go crazy, and then I said, "You wanted the best, you got the best, the hottest band in the world, KISS!" They went nuts, and I had a lifelong fantasy fulfilled. KISS went through the song probably 10 times, five cameras each time so that's a lot of footage. And here's why KISS is so cool. Any other band, after the song would go away while we set up again. They hung out on the stage, signing autographs. People would come up, very well behaved, to the lip of the stage and KISS would lean down, and sign T-shirts, women's breasts. Kids were being lifted up to take pictures with the band. They were so gracious and cool. KISS knew that if they left the stage a lot of the extras would leave because they weren't being paid. We did pay around 500 extras. The others were there because they were KISS fans. So KISS stayed there and signed autographs and talked to the crowd. Paul would keep them hyped up by yelling to them and stuff. The intensity of this day I can't put into words. There was so much to get in so short a time. After we finally got the first shot off around 3:00 or 4:00, we realized that our plans that we so meticulously orchestrated were out the window. We had to wing it this day too, which worked fine also. We threw away the plans and got what we could get. But the pressure was on because we didn't want to forget anything or blow anything.

**G: Did you find out later that you missed something?**

**A:** Just little things nobody else would give a shit about. I wanted to get a close-up of Gene's fingers on the bass strings and it never happened. I could have had one of the cameras get close during one of the takes but I didn't, and when we were editing the concert sequence someone mentioned it. Anyway, we had mapped out the song, verses and chorus, where things would happen. This part of the song, Gene breathes fire. That part of the song, Ace's guitar smokes.

**G: In concert, those things don't usually happen during "Detroit Rock City."**

**A:** We wanted the concert scene to be larger than life. We can only show one song. We wanted people to leave the theater feeling like they've seen a KISS concert even though they've only seen one song. We felt a fun way to do it

*Detroit Rock City was slated for release in April before it was moved to August, which put Rifkin under the gun. But he found it more of a challenge than a problem: "I work well under pressure so it didn't bug me. It actually makes it more exciting," says the director, on the set with Eddie Furlong here.*

would be to put all the famous icons of a KISS show into the one song. Breathing fire, spitting blood, smoking guitar, floating drum kit. Sure, the diehard purists are gonna go, "Wait a minute..." but it's in the spirit of the movie. Poetic license. We took the liberty, all of us, not just me. The band told me to do whatever I wanted; I'm the director. There I was with four nine-foot tall superheroes telling me, "We'll do whatever you tell us to do." That was pretty incredible. But KISS is larger than life. The whole idea is to blow people out of the water. We can't show a whole KISS show, and they wouldn't want to show a whole KISS show. They want to give people a taste of a KISS show so people will go see KISS live. The idea was for the end of the film to be indicative of the concert. So after we finished shooting the song a number of times, we put all five cameras on Gene and watched him blow fire, and then we put all five cameras on Ace and had his guitar smoke.

**G: Were there any technical difficulties?**

**A:** Ace's guitar didn't smoke on the first take. Something broke. A small technical snafu. But we got it perfectly on the second take. There's a part at the end where Peter throws his drumstick into the crowd, and Jam catches it—Peter's his idol and he's the drummer of their band, Mystery. Peter had a bucket of like 50 drumsticks and threw drumstick after drumstick. Sam only caught a few but we faked that with cuts. The last take we did with the band was Gene spitting blood because we couldn't clean him up [otherwise]. That went fantastically. Got it on the first take. After the band was gone, and all the extras that came to see KISS were gone, there were 500 extras left that we had paid.

**G: Why did you need paid extras if so many fans came willingly?**

**A:** Because we couldn't tell the fans that came for free that they had to stay. They leave when they want to leave. We could keep the 500 for as long as we wanted. We got them through an extras casting agency.

So we packed those people around our four kids and put the cameras on their faces while Hotter than Hell jumped around behind the cameras,

going through the song a few times. We got a bunch of close-ups of the kids screaming and cheering.

**G: When it was over, how did you feel?**

**A:** I felt like I'd just been through Vietnam, like I'd been given my honorable discharge from some battle somewhere. It was amazing, the weight that was lifted. The hardest thing was now over. You never know while you're shooting if by the end of the day you're gonna have everything you need to make this scene the best it can be. But we got everything we needed.

**G: After that, how many more days did you have left to shoot?**

**A:** Only about three days. It was weird. We went from shooting the most intense, the most exhilarating, the most raucous thing I've ever been involved in shooting before, with the biggest scope, the most extras, everything, to a little scene with mom, Jam and the priest the next day. It wasn't anticlimactic; it was a welcome relief. That was a heavy scene to shoot all in one day, but in comparison it was an easy day. If we had shot it before the KISS concert it would have seemed like a heavy day. Shooting it afterward, it seemed like a walk in the park. It was a welcome relief. We had a couple more days after that. Then we had the big cast and crew party at a bowling alley.

**G: But your work wasn't over, was it?**

**A:** No. We came back from Toronto and immediately Pete Schink and our other editor Mark Goldblatt continued to assemble the picture. Pete had been assembling it all the way along. He was up in Toronto with us. The dailies are what we shoot, the raw footage, and he assembled it really quickly. It's called the edited assembly. I'd go in the evening and check it out, at the production offices. I'd check out some scenes and discuss what the best takes were. When we were done shooting they packed up all the editing equipment and shipped it back to L.A. Because of our accelerated schedule we had two full time editors, two secondary editors, and five AVIDs in order to get this done in time. Pete worked on just about all the movies I directed, *The Chase*, *The Dark Backward*. Mark Goldblatt edited *Terminator*, *Terminator 2*, *The Last Boy*



*Scout, Armageddon, Starship Troopers*, a lot. It's a phenomenal compliment to us that New Line would feel so confident in the film that they would pay for someone of his caliber, and also that someone of his caliber would want to work on the movie.

**G: What's the biggest challenge at this stage of the process?**

**A:** The rough cut came in at about three hours long. The hard part is cutting stuff out without compromising the story and not losing too many good moments. The good news is that any scenes that get omitted will be on the special DVD edition.

**G: Did any scenes or characters get taken out completely?**

**A:** We didn't cut out any characters but a lot of scenes got cut, or cut shorter. Most of the stuff that was cut out was just fat, although there were a couple of great scenes with Eddie, great character stuff, that we had to shorten because they unfortunately slowed down the pace of the film and didn't really fit the tone. There are certain things you read and you think, "This doesn't propel the story forward, why should we bother shooting it?" But then you shoot it and people love it so it's a good thing you didn't cut it out. It's better to have too much than not enough. But the original came in at three hours, way too long for a comedy. The running time is now about 88 minutes.

**G: How much did the story change from the original screenplay?**

**A:** The basic concept is the same, but a lot of dialogue got cut down. Say there's a three-page scene that establishes the fact that Jam is a sensitive kid, whereas Trip is a little crazier. You find that you can get that in the first three lines and you don't need three pages to get that across. The look in Jam's eyes tells you he's sensitive. You don't need to belabor the point with three pages of dialogue. Then there are scenes that get cut out

just because there's no time. There's a scene where Hawk, Trip and Lex break Jam out of St. Bernard's Catholic School and they're off to the concert. What originally happens is they jump in the car, they fly down the road singing "Shout it Out Loud," and they give Jam some clothes to change into, and have a conversation about how Jam's mom is gonna send him to Alcatraz for this but he doesn't care because he's gonna see KISS. They're all talking about the concert and as he's changing his clothes, he has his ass hanging out the window, and they pass another car with the girl he's in love with driving down the road with her parents. They see each other but before they can say anything the tire blows in the guys' car and they're stuck on the side of the road, late for their train to Detroit. Then we cut to the fact that they missed the train. In the current cut, most of that is out. They run out of the Catholic school, they're on the road singing "Shout it Out Loud," and the tire blows. It says everything that needs to be said. All the stuff with Beth and his ass hanging out the window wasn't essential for the storyline and when you're looking for things to cut out those are the kind of things you cut. It's a fun scene and it will be on the DVD for people who want to see it. Everything that we cut out that's of any value in terms of it's an interesting scene or moment or a fun performance will be on the DVD in an area called deleted scenes.

**G: Are you doing the narration for it?**

**A:** Yes I am. There will be like 45 minutes of deleted scenes plus the director's commentary and interviews with a lot of people involved in making the film. But I'm very excited about the final cut. The movie was originally going to be released in April but we had a test screening in February and it went so well that New Line decided to move it to August. The second screening, a month

after the first one, went even better so they canceled the third one. Why waste time and test again when we can just get it finished?

**G: Was it the same cut both times?**

**A:** The second was shorter by about seven minutes.

**G: Do you think test screenings a good indication?**

**A:** My feeling about test screenings is that the value is in watching the audience's reaction. If they laugh at a joke you know it works. If they're smiling when they're walking out of the theater you can feel good. If they're fidgeting and you can sense tension and boredom in the audience you know it's too long. But where I do not think test screenings are of value is in the cards that are filled out afterward. You can sit any audience down and show them the best movie ever made and say, "Tell us what's wrong with this movie," and they'll come up with something because they were asked. The idea is to read the crowd, to have the confidence to tell whether something's working or not by the reaction. You don't need to see scores and numbers. That to me is overrated.

**G: Who attends test screenings?**

**A:** They recruit people that might be the audience for the film. But it's all kept very secret. It's a work in progress. You don't want people sneaking in and reviewing it on the Internet, though that might happen anyway.

**G: How involved are you in the music for the film and the soundtrack?**

**A:** Very involved. Picking the songs is as much a part of the creative process as picking the actors and the sets.

**G: Soundtracks have become a very important part of marketing a movie.**

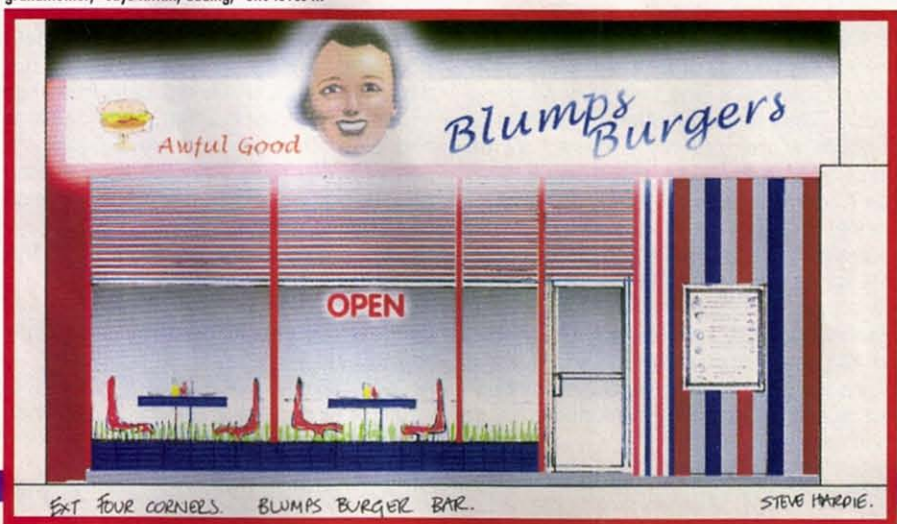
**A:** Yes. Anything that helps promote the movie, I'm all for. If the soundtrack is a hit and that helps the movie, great.

**G: Did you have any songs in mind for particular scenes as you were shooting?**

**A:** Yeah, but I also want to keep an open mind, to see how it looks cut together with a certain song. The idea for the music on the movie is we wanted to have some really great KISS music in it because it's about kids going to a KISS concert. But we really wanted to make a soundtrack that was indicative of the decade, not only the KISS library. There are lots of songs by lots of great '70s acts. Right now we have Thin Lizzy's "Jailbreak" for the escape from the school scene. We've got Cheap Trick, "Surrender," we've got Sweet, T-Rex. We have disco songs, like "Makin' It." We have funny songs like "The Piña Colada Song." We have the Sex Pistols' "Anarchy in the U.K." playing in one scene. Probably "Iron Man," Cat Scratch Fever." There will be dozens more songs in the movie than we'll be able to fit on the soundtrack. In fact, we have more songs than New Line's previ-

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The Blump's Burgers restaurant in *Detroit Rock City* is the latest installment of a running inside joke that began when Rifkin directed *The Dark Backward*, a 1991 film starring Bill Paxton, Judd Nelson, and James Caan. "It's an oddball black comedy and it takes place in its own reality, not the past not the future but its own urban timelessness," he explains. "In order to perpetuate that I didn't want to have any recognizable products. So I created a company called Blump's that creates all the products. Blump's bacon, Blump's vacuum cleaners, whatever. Ever since then I've used Blump's in every movie and always will." In *The Chase* with Charlie Sheen, it's a Blump's truck that jackknifes on a highway, and Rifkin's production company is called Blump's International Films. The woman's face in the logo? "My grandmother," says Rifkin, adding, "She loves it."





# ADAM RIFKIN

continued

ous biggest song movie, which was *Boogie Nights*, they had 35 songs and we have about 56.

**G: Might there be two albums?**

**A:** I hope so. If the first one does well. We've got a killer soundtrack with a ton of music. The opening title sequence will be cut to "Love Gun."

**G: You turned that over to Tommy Thayer to put together. Why?**

**A:** Tommy did a great job putting together *The Second Coming*. He's familiar with the footage and has a great sense of that type of editing and rock 'n' roll spirit. We didn't have time to do it ourselves, but he's working with us. He's implementing it but we've had meetings on what it's going to be. The idea of the credit sequence is that it's a montage cut to music that sums up '70s pop culture and that KISS was very present in '70s pop culture. [It includes] covers of magazines, newspaper headlines, and other things from the '70s that aren't directly related to KISS.

**G: Because it's a period piece, you had to be conscious of the time and the accuracy, particularly about KISS. What did you do to ensure consistency and prevent anachronisms?**

**A:** Myself, the production designer, the costume designer, everyone involved creatively all made sure that everything we created for the film was authentic for the period. The movie is set in 1978 so anything between 1973 and 1978 was fair game. We paid really close attention to detail. We knew that the diehard fans would notice.

**G: You couldn't use modern products in the convenience store.**

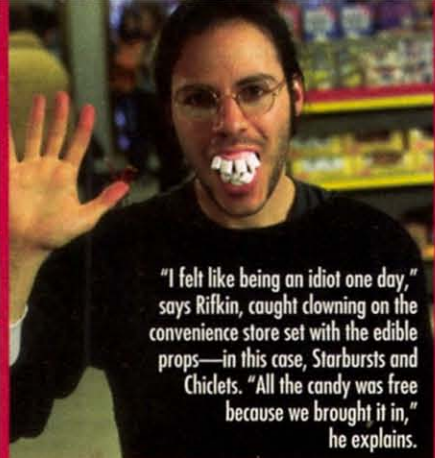
**A:** The products were all authentic from the decade. We got certain things from the companies themselves. But we had a real hard time with product placement, getting stuff for free or getting permission to use it because of the drug use in the movie. So we'd find an ad for a product in a magazine from the period and feed it into a computer and make our own labels.

**G: And you had to recreate some of the KISS merchandise.**

**A:** Yes, a lot of stuff we recreated because the old stuff looks old. The T-shirts are faded, and we needed them to look like new T-shirts.

**G: KISS themselves don't look exactly like they did in '78 either.**

**A:** Again, poetic license. The fun of the movie is in its spirit not only in its detail. In the concert, the guys look great, they look phenomenal, they look young, and they look like the rock gods that they are. Sure, 1978 was over 20 years ago. Everybody changes a little bit over a 20 year period, but so what? They still



"I felt like being an idiot one day," says Rifkin, caught clowning on the convenience store set with the edible props—in this case, Starbursts and Chiclets. "All the candy was free because we brought it in," he explains.

embody the same spirit they did in '78, they have the same amount of energy, and the songs still sound just as rockin'. If somebody out there is gonna be so particular that they can't appreciate the film because of that, I say stay home because you're no fun.

**G: You've talked about being a KISS fan—do you think it was a prerequisite for this movie or could anyone else have directed it?**

**A:** I don't think it was a prerequisite just like don't think it would be a prerequisite to be a murderer to make a movie about a serial killer, but I think it's a lot more fun for me as a KISS fan to make this movie. Could another director have directed this movie and have it be great? Absolutely. For as many directors as there are there are as many interpretations of a piece of material. The reason I wanted to direct this movie was I'm a huge KISS fan, I relate to the characters, I lived in the decade. It's like a time capsule for me. It's like going back in time.

**G: But you didn't see KISS back then, did you?**

**A:** No, I like Jam was not allowed to as a kid. My mother had no problem with me watching horror movies, I've been a horror movie fanatic from the time I was a little kid. But going to a KISS concert scared her so I didn't see them till much later. The whole package of making a movie about kids this age at this time spoke to me and that's why I feel my interpretation of this material is as valid as anybody's.

**G: Which of the characters do you identify with or relate to most?**

**A:** I say I'd relate to Lex the most, but there's a little part of all the characters in me. I think that's why they make a good group. They embody different aspects of a whole. More accurately, there's a little bit of all of them in me. But being a KISS fan I was able to add things that might have made it a little more fun. In the movie now, but wasn't in the original script, Christine is in the car with the boys and is arguing with them about disco vs. rock 'n' roll. She says, "Disco is so big I bet that even KISS will do a disco song some day," and they all bust out laughing like that's the funniest thing they've ever heard.

**G: And of course KISS recorded "I Was Made For Loving You."**

**A:** Exactly. That's sort of a cool little thing that's fun for us and for the KISS fans. Another example, I knew there was a KISS bath towel, I remember a kid at camp had one. Tim Sullivan put the word out on the Internet and we got one. If I weren't a KISS fan I wouldn't have known about the bath towel.

**G: Walk me through the casting process. You were in on that from the beginning, right?**

**A:** Yes. The best way I can define my job as director is that any time there was a creative decision to be made it is my responsibility to make it, and that includes from the lead down to the smallest extra role. It's other people's jobs to present me with lots of choices. I'm very collaborative with my producers and with everybody but ultimately it's my decision. The casting is as much of an importance in that decision-making process as what color should the walls be in Jam's bedroom. But you hire creative and talented people, you have a good team and you trust their creative instincts and so on. But casting specifically, the most important thing to me when we started the movie was that the four leads have the perfect chemistry. I keep a completely open mind during the casting process. I might read the script and see Jam looking a certain way and if someone walked in that didn't look like that it would be easy for me to say, "He's not right for Jam" and not give him a chance. I know what kind of spirit I want from each character so when people come in and read a part they might be reading for one role but would be better for another role.

**G: Did that happen?**

**A:** Yeah, with Eddie Furlong. Eddie came in and read for the role of Trip but when he walked out of the room I said, "There's Hawk." The opposite example is Sam Huntington. He read for Jam and was perfect for Jam. He looks just like I pictured Jam; it was so easy. We saw hundreds of Jams in L.A. and couldn't find anyone and then we got a videotape from New Hampshire that he made in his living room. We popped the tape in and we said, "That's Jam." It was that quick. That was the hardest role to cast until we saw that tape. We were at a complete loss prior to that. He was the last to get cast. The other three we cast from our first day or two of casting. They came in and blew us away and we thought, "It can't be this easy." So we kept seeing people but we didn't see anybody else that was any better.

**G: Were they there to audition at the same time?**

**A:** We saw them all individually.

**G: How did you know they'd be right together?**

**A:** You have to have trust in your own intuition about these things. Sometimes you're right, sometimes you're wrong



but I had a vibe. I think one of my strengths is casting and reading people's presence and chemistry and how their chemistry might work together. So far, so good. We put all of their auditions on tape and watched them in continuity and it felt right.

**G: Were your intuitions right when they finally met?**

**A:** They had the perfect chemistry. I was blown away. When you saw these guys together you believed they had grown up together and were best friends. You know how friends will tell each other to f.ck off and it doesn't mean anything because they're comfortable with each other, or they're palling around one minute and pissed the next, then palling around again? That's how these four were. Ed and Giuseppe worked together before on *American History X*. But the four of them were perfect together. I wouldn't have wanted anybody different in any of the roles.

**G: Did you do have to do anything specifically to get the best performances out of them?**

**A:** I was always pushing them to do certain things. For example, Eddie Furlong's character is the leader of the pack, and Eddie Furlong as a person is a really mellow, hang back, take it easy and be cool type so that was one of the things we worked on together, that Hawk is a leader and a take charge kind of guy. With all of them, part of my job is to push so I get the things that I need from the characters, and another part of my job is to hang back and let them do what they do best and there was a great balance of both. They're playing juvenile delinquent burnouts, and there was a bit of playing that so well that it carried over into life on the set. But there was never any problem, it was all in the spirit of fun. They all have their own style of working. Giuseppe is very quiet, hangs back. Wants to be a filmmaker himself. He sits back, takes everything in, always watching. He's the least demanding actor I've ever worked with in that he never required coddling, he's not a prima donna in any way. None of them were prima donnas in that they were demanding. But he would hang back, do his job, and then hang back on his chair and just watch. Jimmy, on the other hand, was always around. Any time there was a huddle he wanted to be in on it. Anytime there was a meeting, he wanted in on that meeting. He always wanted to know what's going on, what you're talking about. Very curious, very much wanting to be a part of everything.

**G: Did that annoy you?**

**A:** Yes, but you know, that's kinda part of his charm. And that's why he was perfect for the role of Trip. Sam is the sweetest kid. Great kid, always well prepared. He's underage so he was there with his mom and had school on the set. There are certain restrictions you have to work within when you're dealing with

actors that are underage. We knew that going into it. Eddie's a really cool guy, he's extremely intense, he keeps to himself but he's not reclusive. He plays it cool and he wears it well. When it came to being the leader in the movie we had to work on it a bit but that's all part of the process. Natasha's hysterical; she's hilarious. She's always saying things to shock people and it's absolutely impossible to shock me so she kept trying and it didn't work. But it's easy to shock a lot of people and she got a big kick out of shocking many.

**G: She was only on set for a brief time.**

**A:** 10 days. But she does a great job in the movie. She and Eddie hit it off, they're still together. She's a great gal, really funny, great actress. Great comedic timing. Melanie is super sweet, really talented, takes her craft really seriously. The entire supporting cast was phenomenal. Every actor that came in did their job and did it perfectly every take. Ron Jeremy did a brilliant job. Shannon is one of the most underrated actresses working today. She's done a lot of those late night erotic thrillers and as a result has gotten herself pigeon-holed, but she's a phenomenal actress and is a consummate professional. And if and when people give her better roles in different kinds of movies she will prove to them beyond the shadow of a doubt that she can transcend that.

**G: So you'd work with any of the cast again?**

**A:** Absolutely, I look forward to the sequel.

**G: Will there be one?**

**A:** I hope so.

**G: What would be the premise, and would you write it and or direct?**

**A:** If this movie is successful enough to spawn a sequel I would want to recreate the same team that brought the original to the screen so I would want Carl to write it. There are a lot of ideas floating around about a sequel but I don't want to jinx it. I think that too much talk about a sequel before the first one comes out is bad luck. It wouldn't be about a KISS concert. It would be about these four guys and the next chapter in their lives. We'll see.

**G: What's next for you after you're done with the post-production? Will you take a break?**

**A:** No, I hate to take breaks. I don't sit still for a minute.

**G: I understand you're going to work with Gene Simmons again, and Tim Sullivan.**

**A:** Yes, at New Line Cinema. *Real Monsters*. All I can tell you right now is that it's a big comedy with lots of laughs and lots of scares, inspired by films such as *Abbott and Costello Meet Frankenstein* and the like. Lots of physical comedy, lots of scary monsters. Lots of special effects.

**G: When would you shoot it?**

**A:** It hasn't even been written yet. I'm

writing it. I write pretty quickly so I hope it's not too far down the line. Hopefully we'll be making it pretty soon.

**G: Anything else in the works?**

**A:** *Real Monsters* is first and foremost, but I have a film I'm doing with my producing partner from my previous films, Brad Wyman. Can't talk about it in detail, but it's a comedy, a big budget comedy in a tropical setting. I also owe some scripts to some other companies and I've got some other movies, I have other scripts I want to write. There are a lot of projects in various stages of development but I'd rather not talk about specifics. You know how things go. You put 20 balls in the air and two of them stick and those are the ones you do, and I don't want to talk about ones that might not happen.

**G: Given your choice, what actors do you want to work with?**

**A:** That's difficult to say because for me it's about the material. I'm sure there are a lot of great actors out there that would be a blast to work with, and I like the idea of casting against type, taking someone known for really serious work and putting them in a comedy. Or the reverse. If I'm doing a movie that is perfect for someone I admire and would love to work with, great but I wouldn't want to work with somebody just because. It would have to be the right material and the right project.

**G: Is comedy your forte?**

**A:** I want to do a variety. I think comedy is fun, I love it and I think I'm pretty good at it, but I love drama, I love action, I love horror. I love all kinds of movies and I want to keep making as many as possible before I die. I'm 32. I plan to make a lot of movies.

**G: You've come very far for someone your age.**

**A:** I've been very, very lucky but I also work very hard. I sold the script *Mouse Hunt* to Dreamworks a couple years ago. It was a big movie and a great experience for me, but that was the 30th script I wrote. A few of them I've made as independent films. I've made six independent films. But those are apart from the 30 scripts that didn't sell.

**G: Are you getting more interest for them now that you're better known?**

**A:** Yes, which is fine with me. I believe they're as strong today as when I wrote them, and I have no problem with that because I want to make them all. I think they'd all make really cool movies. They're all different kinds of movies. Some I'd like to be seen made as an HBO movie, maybe produce and let a young director that I think is really good direct. Some may translate into a series that I could executive produce. But most of them I want to see made as movies because I love movies.

**G: There's going to be a big premiere for *Detroit Rock City*. Will you be there?**

**A:** Of course! I wouldn't miss it. •



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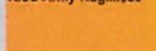
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## Detroit Rock City Movie promo items

Two rare items only given out to attendees of a movie convention in New York last Spring. This was the first promotional merchandise to hit the public and has the incorrect original release date of 4/16/99. Promo sticker is 4" wide. Promo make-up kit is 6" wide and contains KISS make-up and applicator. The *KISS Museum* came across a very limited supply from a private collector; you can't buy these in a store. Get them while they're available, we won't be able to get more! Very unusual and very cool items. Both sold together at one low price!  
**KISS Movie promo Sticker and Make-up Kit...\$9**  
**SPECIAL: Three sets for only \$24**



**Temporary Tattoos - set of 12**  
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**Ceramic Plate**  
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# DETROIT ROCK CITY

## Conversations With The Cast

by Gerri Miller

### EDWARD FURLONG

#### "Hawk"

A black and white photograph of actor Edward Furlong. He is wearing a dark green, button-up jacket over a dark t-shirt. He has dark, wavy hair and is looking towards the camera with a slight smile. His right hand is raised, pointing towards the right side of the frame. He is sitting on a light-colored, crumpled fabric.

Born on August 2, 1977, Pasadena, California native Furlong is the only member of his family in show business (he has an 18 year-old brother still in school), but lives on his own in L.A., which he missed while on location in Toronto. "It was cold as hell," he explains.

■ Edward Furlong became a movie star at the tender age of 13 as John Connor in *Terminator 2: Judgment Day*, and segued from there to roles in such diverse but largely dramatic films as *American Heart*, *Little Odessa*, *Brainscan*, *Before and After*, *Pecker*, and *American History X*. Now he's taking a decidedly lighter turn in *Detroit Rock City*, which brings the actor who appeared in Aerosmith's "Livin' on the Edge" video together with another legendary rock band—and fulfills both a '70s rock fantasy and an exhibitionist one, thanks to a memorable strip club scene.

**G: What attracted you to the movie?**

**E:** I've always wanted to do a '70s movie, where you're smoking pot, going to a concert—just a fun movie. That's what attracted me to it. I knew it would have cool music, be a fun time. It's a rock 'n' roll movie and that's one of the reasons I took it in the first place.

**G: What did you like best about the experience?**

**E:** Working with the cast. They're all great. While we were up there we got to hang out one night with Marilyn Manson, that was cool. We got to go to the KISS concert in Buffalo which was cool, and we could walk around backstage because we got all access passes.

**G: Were you into KISS before?**

**E:** I wasn't an avid KISS fan. This is the most I've ever listened to KISS though I have *Destroyer*. I like music from the time, Led Zeppelin, Pink Floyd.

**G: Did you do any research on the '70s?**

**E:** No not really. I think teenagers going to a concert are the same way today.

**G: How do you see your character, Hawk?**

**E:** Hawk is what I'm like going to see a concert with friends. The fun part of me, I guess. It's four guys going to a KISS concert and their adventures. Hawk is the leader of the group, the guy who's the most willing to go through anything to get to the concert. He has the most determination.

**G: Are you a determined person?**

**E:** Under the right circumstances.

**G: What was it like doing the striptease?**

**E:** It was fun. I think in the back of my mind I always wanted to do a strip for people, and now I got to.



# STARS

**G:** There's such a glut of teen movies now. How does *Detroit Rock City* stand apart from the crowd?

**E:** I think it's a real authentic movie, a rock 'n' roll movie with Gene Simmons attached to it. There are almost too many teen movies out now but this one stands out on its own. It's more intimate. Adam Rifkin and John Leonetti, the cinematographer, have given the movie a real authentic look, like the '70s. It doesn't look like any other teen movie. It's more like a *Fast Times [at Ridgemont High]*, that kind of movie.

**G:** You've done mainly serious films like *American History X* and *Before and After*. Do you like comedy as much?

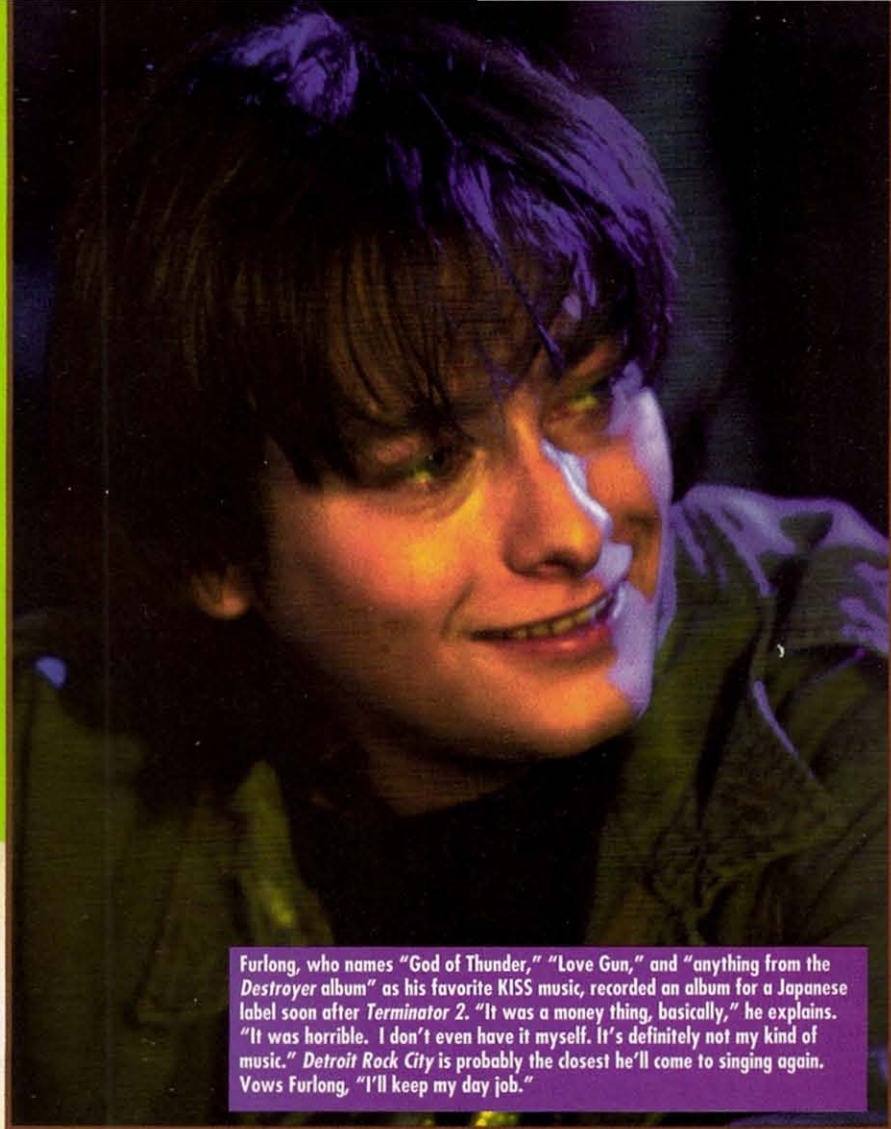
**E:** Oh yeah. I like doing both. They're both totally different types of acting. It's change, it's something new. It's cool to have variety. My goal is to work on good stories with good directors and good people.

**G:** What are your criteria in choosing a project? Is it the script first, the director? The other people in it?

**E:** It depends. You get a lot of so-so scripts but with really good directors or you might get a great script with a first time director. It all depends.

**G:** What kind of part would you like next?

**E:** I don't know. I want to play a psycho one of these days. [After this interview, Furlong was cast as a law student wrongly accused of trafficking cocaine and sent to prison in *Animal*



Furlong, who names "God of Thunder," "Love Gun," and "anything from the *Destroyer* album" as his favorite KISS music, recorded an album for a Japanese label soon after *Terminator 2*. "It was a money thing, basically," he explains. "It was horrible. I don't even have it myself. It's definitely not my kind of music." *Detroit Rock City* is probably the closest he'll come to singing again. Vows Furlong, "I'll keep my day job."



He has a steamy encounter with Shannon Tweed in *Detroit Rock City*, but off the set Furlong bonded with Natasha Lyonne, who plays Christine.

*Factory*, opposite Willem Dafoe.]

**G:** Do you like to go from movie to movie without a break?

**E:** No, but I'd love to always have a job.

**G:** Who would you like to work with?

**E:** There are so many directors and actors I'd like to work with that it's pretty hard to pick one. I don't know. I would have liked to work with Stanley Kubrick. I'd love to work with Robert DeNiro. Dustin Hoffman.

**G:** Would you be interested in television or theater?

**E:** That's a tough one, too. I definitely want to do theater. TV, I don't know. Maybe if the right thing comes along.

**G:** You got into acting by accident, didn't you?

**E:** I was at an arcade and a casting director came up to me and asked me if I wanted to try out for *T2*. That's pretty much when I decided I wanted to be an actor, I guess. It wasn't something that was planned or I wanted to get into but it was like, "I'll go with it."

**G:** What do you think you'd be doing if that never happened?

**E:** Being a bag lady. I don't know. It's hard to

continued on page 66



# DRC's CAST ★ DRC's CA

## SAM HUNTINGTON "Jam"

■ At the age of 15, Sam Huntington made his movie debut as Tim Allen's loincloth-wearing son in *Jungle 2 Jungle*, launching a promising career that continues with *Detroit Rock City* and his role of Jeremiah 'Jam' Bruce, drummer of Mystery and loser (thanks, Mom!) of the precious KISS tickets. Huntington, who found working on the Toronto set "like coming to work for friends every day," had "a blast" making the movie, as we discussed during and after the shoot.

**G: You auditioned for *Detroit Rock City* by videotape, I heard.**

**S:** I never had to leave my house. I made a couple of videotapes and sent them to the casting director. I live in New Hampshire.

**G: How did you get into the movie business, living so far from Hollywood?**

**S:** It's actually a long story. Since I was nine I wanted to be a movie actor and my mom said, "Wait until you're 13 and if you're still serious about it we'll see what we can do." Meanwhile I did professional theater at the Peterborough Players, in Peterborough, NH. When I turned 13 I asked my mom if we could go to New York so I could audition for an agent. She said yes, but didn't think they'd

take me seriously because I lived in New Hampshire, four hours out of New York. The next day after I auditioned for the agent I had five auditions.

**G: How soon after that did you get *Jungle 2 Jungle*?**

**S:** About 10 months after I started.

**G: Anything else we may have seen you in?**

**S:** I did an episode of *Law & Order* but that's basically it. It's OK with me because I needed a break. *Jungle 2 Jungle* was four months of the hardest work of my life, really intense. I wanted to get home, see my friends, and relax.

**G: What memories do you have from making *Detroit Rock City*?**

**S:** Late nights, the cold, fun times with the guys. It was a very good experience.

**G: Was being the youngest cast member a problem?**

**S:** No, everyone got along real well. We're all very different but we mesh well.

**G: What scenes stand out in your mind?**

**S:** The bathroom scene's right up there.

**G: How about the scene in the confessional? Was it your first love scene?**

**S:** Yes. A lot of what we shot was cut out, to tighten it up. But it was cool because she's really a great girl. It was kind of fun. You know what my favorite scene is? Eddie and the scalpers. Santana's playing in the background, it's just a cool scene. And the concert scene was awesome.

**G: Was that the first time you saw KISS live?**

**S:** No, we saw them in Buffalo the week before that. The only other concert I've been to was a Dave Matthews concert. I'm a huge Metallica fan, but I've never seen them live and I'm dying to. I like their old stuff better than their new stuff. I just got *Garage Inc.*, I have the black album, *Master of Puppets*. They're my favorite band in the whole world. I like a lot of rap, too. I like Redman and Method Man. Redman's my favorite.

**G: Are you a KISS fan?**

**S:** I am now. Now I have CDs, videotapes, magazines. Before the shoot I did a lot of research.

**G: You were born way after the '70s so what did you have to learn about the time?**

**S:** How to dress I guess, though they kind of dressed me. I had to get hair extensions. My hair's usually about three inches long and now it's shoulder length. It's kind of ironic because both the movies that I've been in, I've had to have hair extensions. They were such a pain in the ass. They were little pieces of plastic really close to the scalp and when I'd lay my head down at night they'd jab into the side of my head. I couldn't get away from them unless I slept on my face. Not too fun. Getting them out hurt. They tried to take them out with solvent and after about three hours they decided just to cut it. It was ridiculous. It happened on *Jungle 2 Jungle*, too. Those had to be put in every day, an hour and a half in the chair. I've had extensions on both of the films. I hope I can wear short hair the next time.

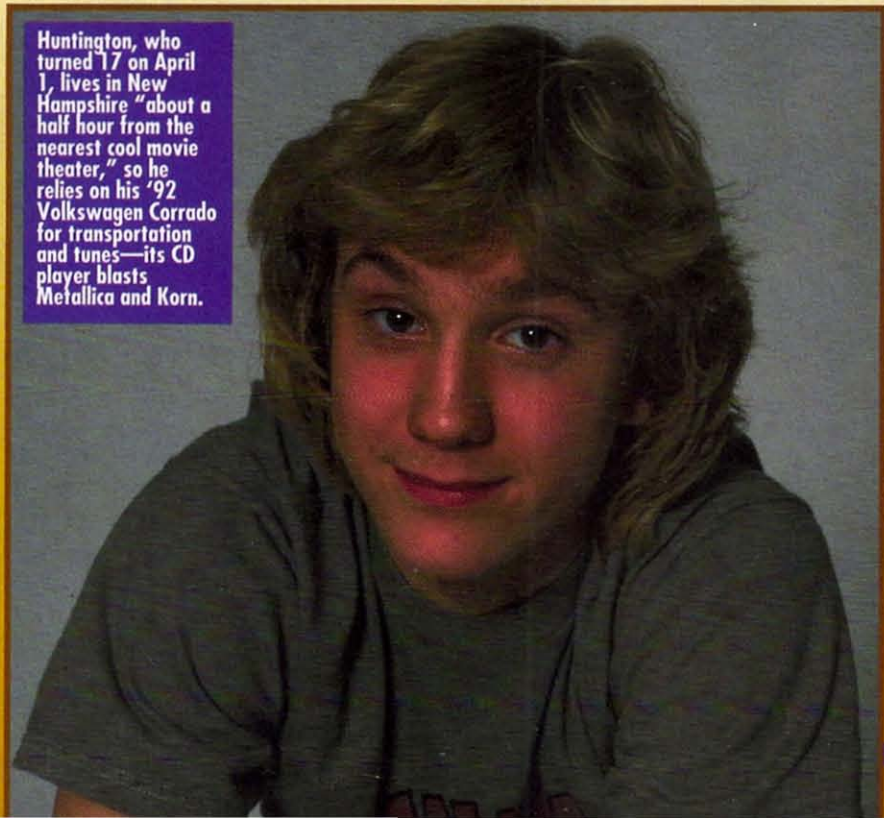
**G: Why didn't you wear a wig?**

**S:** That's what I wanted to do but my head looked big and swelled with the hair under it.

**G: Since you're a minor, you had to have a tutor on the set.**

**S:** Yeah. It's the worst thing on earth. It's jumping into school for 20 minutes to learn absolutely nothing but it jumbles your mind just enough so when

Huntington, who turned 17 on April 1, lives in New Hampshire "about a half hour from the nearest cool movie theater," so he relies on his '92 Volkswagen Corrado for transportation and tunes—its CD player blasts Metallica and Korn.





# Y's CAST



Into sports like snowboarding, waveboarding, football, and trampoline, Huntington studied gymnastics as a boy, training that helps in making movies. "It helps to be able to do your own stunts, and it's kind of fun," he says, though there are some hazards. "One day, I jumped to do something and hit the ceiling hard. It gave me a huge bump. I saw stars," Huntington relates, noting, "I got hit in the face with everything imaginable in this movie, at least 10 times. I got hit with a Bullworker, a phone, a light, a shoe, and a wall. A pencil hits me in the eye. I knock heads with somebody. I needed sterile pads brought to me on the set." Jam's hair extensions also made him suffer for his art. "They were such a pain in the ass," he says.

you come back to set you're a mess. It sucks actually. I hate it.

**G: Couldn't you just get your equivalency?**

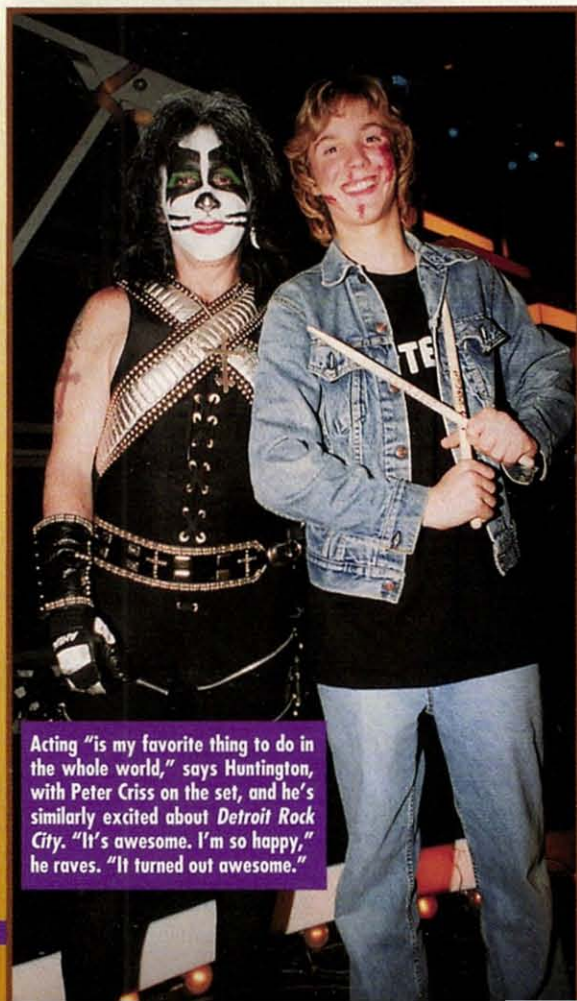
**S:** I want to go through high school, I plan on going to college, too.

**G: To study drama?**

**S:** Probably, or film. That's all I'm interested in. I'm an artsy person in general. I'd like to write and be a director. I'd like to write and direct my own films. I'd like to go to USC or UCLA. My grades are pretty good but I don't know if they're good enough for UCLA, though. I'm thinking heavily about USC. They have a good film program. I'm gonna end up living in L.A., as soon as I graduate. I have another year to go.

**G: Do people back home treat you differently because you're in movies?**

**S:** No they don't. I live in a town of 1500 people. I've known all my friends since I was a baby. Some of them came to visit me in Toronto. Nobody gives me shit for it. When I come back [from a set] I get back in the swing of things. It's fun. I like getting back to school. Everyone in my school gets along pretty well even though there are a lot of cliques. It's a pretty friendly group of kids. I have a great group of friends and when I'm away I really miss them.



Acting "is my favorite thing to do in the whole world," says Huntington, with Peter Criss on the set, and he's similarly excited about *Detroit Rock City*. "It's awesome. I'm so happy," he raves. "It turned out awesome."

**G: Are you the only actor in your family?**

**S:** My mom was an actress and singer when she was younger. She's a writer and taught acting classes for kids at the Black Box Theater Company. My dad owns a commercial woodworking business, cabinetry. He can do anything. Built practically our entire house. He's been doing it for like 23 years. He majored in art. I have a 19 year-old sister, Emily, at Emerson College in Boston.

**G: What kind of parts are you looking for now?**

**S:** I'd love to do more comedies. I love physical comedy; I love when there's stunt work to do. There was more in *Jungle to Jungle* than in *Detroit*, but we had the fight scene at the end, that was fun. But I'd like to get into some kind of dramatic role. Something I can really sink my teeth into. A really in depth character that takes a lot of thought. Something fun and good. It doesn't really matter as long as I like the script and it's gonna be a good movie.

**G: Does your mom help you decide?**

**S:** My mom usually reads most of the scripts; she's the manager too. She's the coolest mom on earth.

**G: Do you know what you're going to work on next?**

**S:** I came close to a couple of TV things but I don't really want to do TV because I don't want to move to L.A. yet. I want to graduate with my class. I just auditioned for a few movies so we'll see.

**G: What actors would you like to work with?**

**S:** I'd love to work with Kevin Spacey, Anthony Hopkins.

**G: Would you like to act in plays again?**

**S:** I'd love to get back into it at some point. Right now I'm just building this kind of career. Right now I'm having a good time so why stop? I know eventually I'll get back to theater, it's where my roots are, where I started.

**G: Are you planning to attend the *Detroit Rock City* premiere?**

**S:** Of course, and I hope to have a huge crowd of my friends with me. I'm really psyched about the movie. I think it's gonna kick ass. I can't wait for it to come out 'cause I can't wait for everyone to see it. ●



# DRC's CAST ★ DRC's CAST

## JAMES DeBELLO "Trip"

■ Back home in L.A. after *Detroit Rock City* finished shooting, James DeBello and Edward Furlong made plans to go to a Marilyn Manson concert. "We went out of our way to get the tickets, and then our limo was late and we had to walk five blocks since [the driver] couldn't get up the hill, but we went...and we got screwed!"—Manson sprained his ankle and stopped the show less than halfway through. Fortunately things work out a lot better for his movie alter ego Trip and his buddies. But playing the spaced out Ace Frehley of the group, "the one with the weed," was a bit of a stretch for him, as our conversation reveals.

**G: Do you relate to Trip at all?**

**J:** I don't even smoke pot, so it's weird. But we have the same sense of humor. We both say things out of the blue to get a laugh.

**G: What memories of making the movie stand out?**

**J:** Getting sprayed with water in the bathroom scene. I did that twice over a period of two days. Got pretty wet. The last day stands out because we took the car for a little spin. Did some donuts. Got screamed at by the line producer. Took a little detour, pretending we were James Bond. It was fun.

**G: Any other favorite scenes?**

**J:** I like the strip bar scene. I like the backstage scene with Lex. Naked chicks in a hot tub. I was in it, in disguise. I had glasses on. I was off that day but I showed up. I wasn't doing anything and I wanted to work. I was there, gawking at the girls.

**G: How was working with Adam Rifkin?**

**J:** Great, really helpful. He's so laid back, not forceful with anything. He lets you work into everything. He's not pushy. He's an amazing person. His forte seems to be in the editing room. What I've seen looks amazing.

**G: Were you a KISS fan when you were growing up?**

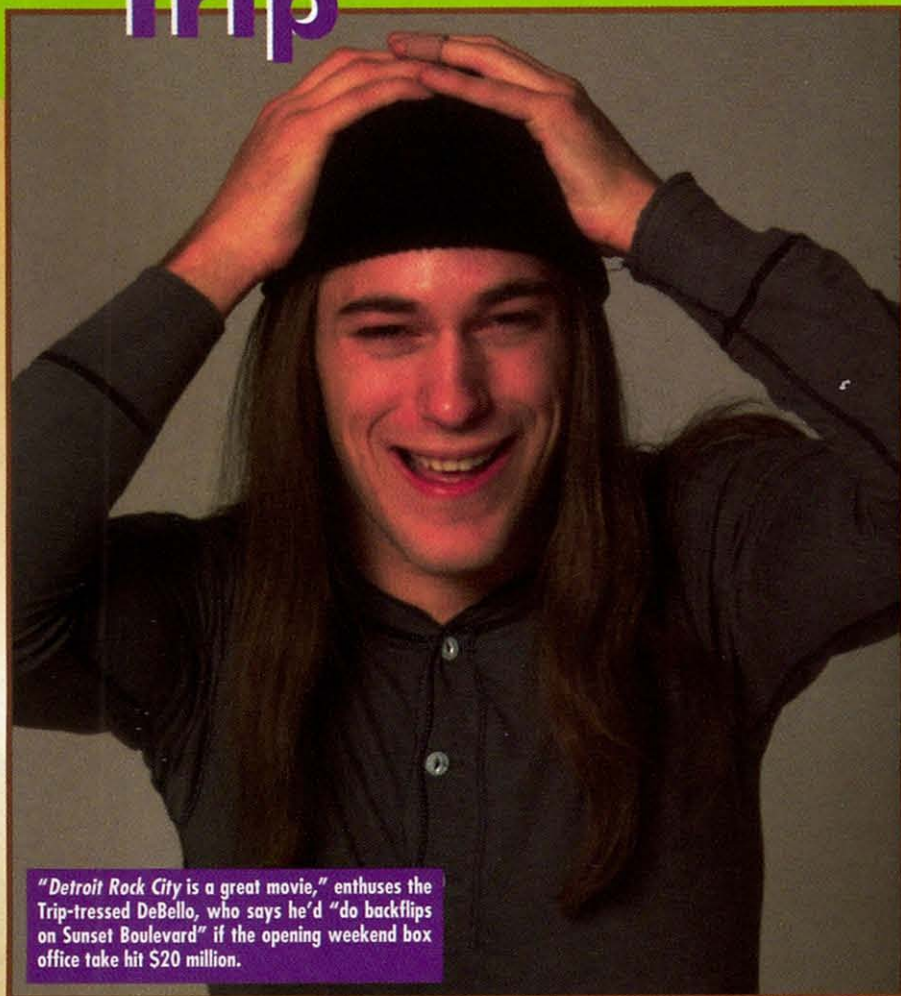
**J:** I wasn't exactly a KISS fan growing up but *Dazed & Confused* is one of my favorite movies and favorite soundtracks, and they had KISS on there. "Rock and Roll All Nite" is one of the best party songs you can have.

**G: Did you do any research for this?**

**J:** They gave us a bunch of KISS tapes and I went out and got some books on the '70s, the lifestyle and how kids were living. I think it was a lot more harmless back then. No AIDS, gangs...everyone was just smoking pot and having a good time.

**G: You had to wear a wig for the movie.**

**J:** Yeah. It bothered me sometimes, having the hair in my face. I never thought it was going to fall off, but it was in my way. I knew it was fake.



"*Detroit Rock City* is a great movie," enthuses the Trip-tressed DeBello, who says he'd "do backflips on Sunset Boulevard" if the opening weekend box office take hit \$20 million.

**G: Did you ever have long hair?**

**J:** It was longer than it is now. I was a Kurt Cobain wanna-be. I was Kurt Cobain for Halloween a few years ago.

**G: Did you bond with your castmates, hang out with them?**

**J:** Oh yeah, it was a blast, especially the last few weeks. We got Nintendo in the hotel rooms, playing video games all night. We got to meet KISS. The remake of the concert was unbelievable. It felt like 1978. So many fans came out to support the film. I think we came out with some amazing stuff. We got to see one of the KISS concerts. It was great. We had all access passes, we could go anywhere.

**G: Was that the first time you saw KISS live?**

**J:** Yeah, it was only my third concert. I saw U2—my all time favorite, Marilyn Manson, and KISS. I'm not a big concert kind of guy. I'm a movie guy. I don't listen to music that much. I don't have a CD

player.

**G: Do you still see guys from the cast?**

**J:** Eddie and I hang out. We've become really good friends.

**G: You're in another summer comedy, *American Pie*.**

**J:** Yeah. Another high school sex comedy. That's a smaller part, I only worked on that for a week. I have like four scenes. [I play] a guy who likes to watch sex on the Internet.

**G: Do you have scenes with Natasha Lyonne?**

**J:** No.

**G: You had a small part in the miniseries *The '60s*.**

**J:** Yeah, I auditioned for one role that I thought I got but they gave me another role. I played a DJ. I'm in it like six seconds. But when I was there I found out I got *Detroit Rock City*.

**G: You were on *ER* a few years ago.**

**J:** Yeah, I did a guest spot. It was one of my first



jobs. It was my first job. I played Danny, a juvenile delinquent that breaks out of juvie by faking seizures and I come into the ER and George Clooney realizes I'm faking. It was amazing for me. I've only been acting for two years.

**G: How did you get into acting?**

**J:** I was playing pool in Los Angeles. I wanted to be a professional pool player when I was 16. An agent came up to me at this celebrity benefit pool tournament, Pool Aid, and asked me if I had any representation. I had no idea what he was talking about. He asked if I was an actor and I said "Yeah." Two years later, here I am.

**G: Do you plan to continue?**

**J:** I'm gonna just go with the flow. The one thing about acting is you get to touch a lot of people and I think that's really cool. As long as I'm getting work I'm gonna keep rockin'. Don't fix what ain't broken.

**G: What's next for you?**

**J:** A movie loosely based on [Dostoyevsky's] *Crime and Punishment*. It's definitely a heavy drama.

**G: What do you play? Who else is in it? When will it be out?**

**J:** Monica Keena, I play her boyfriend, Jimmy. Vincent Kartheiser, he's a stalker guy. Jeffrey Wright, Ellen Barkin, Michael Ironside plays Monica's dad, who Monica and I kill. It's G2 Films,



DeBello, who originally planned to be a professional pool player, found a 24-hour pool hall in Toronto during the movie shoot, but didn't play for cash. "If you're not doing it professionally, you shouldn't take people's money," he says, though he wouldn't mind getting paid for portraying a pool player. But he'd rather be a chameleon-like character actor than a leading man: "I want to be the guy where people go, 'Whoa, is that what he looks like?'"

and MGM. It should be out the end of this year or early next year.

**G: So you're following a comedy with a drama. Would you like to keep having that kind of variety?**

**J:** I don't know, whatever comes up. I would love play Iago in *Othello* and if the opportunity arose that would be cool, but I don't know. I'm not a writer but I'm working on a pilot with a friend of mine. A comedy. As far as acting, it doesn't matter to me. I'd rather do films, but whatever comes up. I'd do TV but I'd rather do movies. We'll see what happens.

**G: Have you done any theater?**

**J:** No. I'm scared of that. I'm not honored enough to be a theater actor, I'd have to go study or something. I'm happy where I am. I'd love to do theater, one of the great plays.

**G: Who do you want to work with, actors and directors?**

**J:** There are a million people I'd like to work with. Scorsese, I'm a movie buff and I loved watching movies when I was growing up. I'd go to the movies and it would make my day. Actors, I'd love to work with everybody. I'd love to experience actors doing what they love to do, on all levels.

**G: You're the only actor in your family?**

**J:** Yeah. My brother's a lawyer, one sister's a teacher and the other's a librarian. What I wanted to be was a pool player. I'm from Philadelphia. I came to L.A. when I was 14. Not on my own, my mom came out. I started playing pool when I was five. That was my goal in life. What does a medium pizza and a professional pool player have in common? Neither of them can feed a family of four. So I'm leaving pool for acting. Not exactly like I was leaving my doctoral thesis. But I take things seriously. It's a business and I do what I have to do to succeed.

**G: Do you feel like you missed out on anything?**

**J:** Of course. I didn't go to the prom, I didn't go to college, I don't know what it's like to walk around high school as a senior, I don't know what it's like to date. I've never been in a relationship. I grew up playing pool and went to Los Angeles. I was going to clubs and hanging out. I feel that I've missed a lot of stuff in that sense but I also feel that I haven't missed a lot of stuff. I don't think there's a lot of kids coming out of high school with the insight I have. My friends are 32. The last girl I went on a date with was 26 and had a seven year-old kid. Of course I feel older than my years. I grew up fast.

**G: Do you plan to get your high school equivalency?**

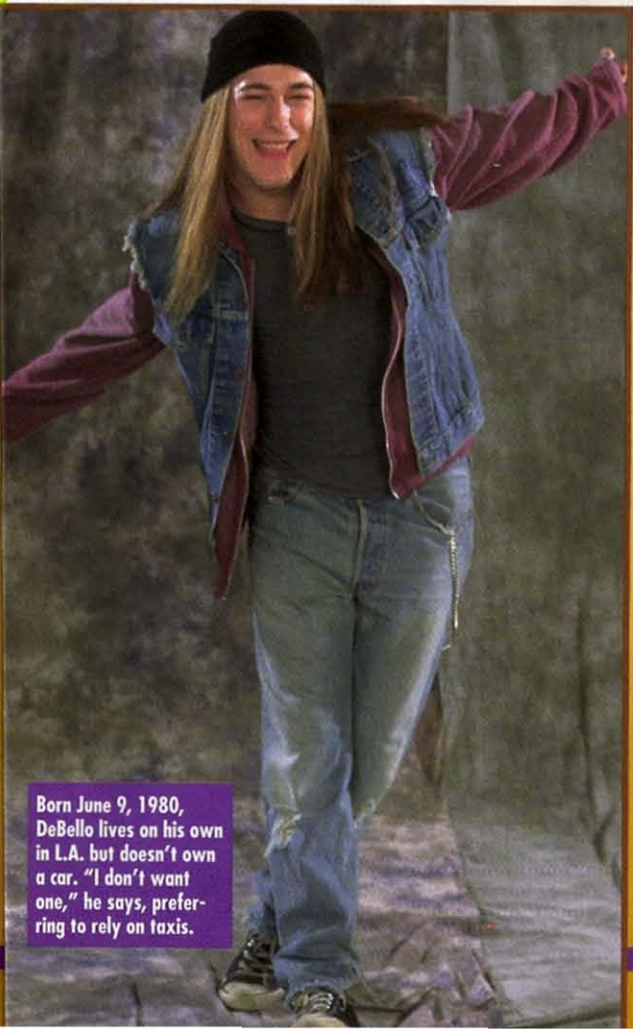
**J:** No. If I want to go to college I'll get my GED. Otherwise I don't see any reason to pay \$150 to take a test.

**G: How do your parents feel about your career?**

**J:** They're excited, of course. How many parents can say "My kid's in a movie?"

**G: Do you miss playing pool?**

**J:** Nope! •



Born June 9, 1980, DeBello lives on his own in L.A. but doesn't own a car. "I don't want one," he says, preferring to rely on taxis.



# DRC's CAST ★ DRC's CAST

## GIUSEPPE ANDREWS

### "Lex"

■ You've seen him as Randy Quaid's son in *Independence Day* and in small roles in *Pleasantville* and *Never Been Kissed*. Now he plays *Detroit Rock City's* Lex, probably the smartest of the group and its superego, constantly worried about the trouble the boys are going to get into. His acting career is definitely on the upswing with a title role in the movie *Pumpkin*, now in the works, but what Andrews really wants to do is direct, as he told me in our conversation.

**G:** What memories of the *Detroit Rock City* experience stand out in your mind?

**GA:** Getting the chance to work with Adam [Rifkin]. I thought he was great, one of the best directors I've ever worked with.

**G:** What's your favorite scene?

**GA:** All the car stuff when we meet the disco guys, the scene in the car when we're driving along the highway. I like the things I do with the dogs, like when I find my Volvo in the chop shop and I rescue the girl and turn the dogs against these guys. It's a pretty cool scene.

**G:** The dogs were trained, I hope?

**GA:** Kinda trained. It took a while to get the shot but it turned out great. There's another scene I really enjoy. After we find out that Trip has lost the tickets, we can't get the tickets at the radio station, we're in the elevator and we're dejected. And that stupid "Piña Colada Song" is playing. It really works great.

**G:** Are you a KISS fan?

**GA:** I never really listened to them. But I got into them. They gave us some CDs and I watched some tapes.

**G:** You weren't born in the '70s. Was that a challenge? Did you do some research on the period?

**GA:** I like the music from back then though I didn't know much about it. It's not too hard to figure out.

**G:** What attracted you to the role of Lex? What did you like about the character?

**GA:** The fact that I could be myself and do what-

ever I wanted with it. It's very much like me in a way.

**G:** How do you compare it to things you've done previously?

**GA:** Everything I've done has been a little different. *Independence Day* was a big sci-fi picture and this is totally different from that. They

really capture a cool thing with the guys hanging out.

**G:** Did you always want to be an actor?

**GA:** I was living in my van and we needed money so I decided I would audition for an agent. That was five years ago. I'm from Key Largo, FL. I came out to L.A. for my dad's job and ended up doing this.

**G:** What's your favorite role to date?

**GA:** I think *Unstrung Heroes*, which Diane Keaton directed. I enjoyed working with her. I played the main guy's best friend. I had a lot of scenes with Michael Richards and John Turturro.

**G:** You've been in a few films more recently.

**GA:** Yes, I was Taw, a guy Drew Barrymore befriends in high school in *Never Been Kissed*, and in *The Other Sister*, I play a really wild, sexual guy at the school that hits on Juliette Lewis. I only did three days on it. A small part.

**G:** You worked with Edward Furlong before, in *American History X*. Did you hang out with him and the other actors on or off the set?

**GA:** Not really, I kind of go to work and do my job and go home. I like to sit by myself and think about things.

**G:** Do you prefer drama to comedy?

**GA:** They're kind of the same. I understand both and both feel right but I prefer drama. I want to get out of comedy.

**G:** What else have you got planned for the future?

**GA:** I'll definitely be directing in a couple of years. I'm going to be directing and doing my films within five years and maybe move back to Florida. I love it there. I don't have any family there but I go back to lay on the beach and relax.

**G:** Do you want to both act and direct?

**GA:** Probably just be a director. It's what I love. I love writing. I want to make films.

**G:** Have you written screenplays?

**GA:** Sure, yeah. I've got one finished now that I'm pitching around. I'm gonna try to start a production company soon. I want to make my own



Andrews, who turned 20 on April 25, didn't go to college and has no desire to. He lives northwest of Los Angeles and in his spare time enjoys "watching films and walking around my town by the beach." An only child, he lives with his dad—he hasn't since his mother "since I was little."



films. I'm writing all the time.

**G: Who are your favorite directors?**

**GA:** My favorite director is [Werner] Fassbinder, the German director. I like a French director named Godard.

**G: I heard you were in a Smashing Pumpkins video.**

**GA:** Yeah, I was in one called "1979," which won Best Alternative Video. Billy Corgan saw *Independence Day* and liked me, liked my look and asked me to do it.

**G: Are you interested in directing videos?**

**GA:** No, just features.

**G: I hear you're from a musical family. Can you elaborate?**

**GA:** My dad played guitar for 25 years. He played with The Bee Gees on the *Saturday Night Fever* record, with a lot of people. He's on the Joe Walsh record *But Seriously Folks*, it had "Life's Been Good" on it. He gave it up. He thinks he's too old now.

**G: Do you play?**

**GA:** Yeah, I've been playing for about five years. When I start directing my films I'd like to use some of my music in it.

**G: Who are your favorite bands?**

**GA:** I listen to Wagner, the German composer. I don't listen to a lot of rock but I like Ron Sexsmith, he's from Canada, and a group called Sun Volt. And Black Sabbath.



While not a KISS fan before *Detroit Rock City*, Andrews has since gotten to know the band's music and picks "Shout it Out Loud" and "the whole *Destroyer* record" as his favorites. He was thrilled with the finished film. "I loved it. I was blown away by Adam's vision of it," he praised director Rifkin. "It's great."



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# DRC's CAST ★ DRC's CAST

## NATASHA LYONNE

### "Christine"

■ She won raves for her performance in the coming-of-age comedy *Slums of Beverly Hills* in 1998, and before that appeared in everything from *Dennis the Menace* to Woody Allen's *Everyone Says I Love You*. This summer, Natasha Lyonne is on screen in two high-profile comedies, *American Pie* and *Detroit Rock City*, and with a few more movies in the can and awaiting release, it's guaranteed that audiences will be seeing a lot more of her in the future. *DRC* director Adam Rifkin praises her comedic timing, and it's not hard to see why—she's both funny on screen and off, with a sense of humor that had me laughing when we talked about her life, her career, and portraying the infamous Christine Sixteen.

**G:** How does *Detroit Rock City* compare to other movies you've done?

**N:** It was a small role, and we shot my scenes at the very beginning, in the first two weeks. It was definitely a change of pace. I don't really relate to disco in the first place, let alone disco bitches with really big mouths. The character's funny but you're laughing at her, not with her. I thought that would hopefully be

funny.

**G:** This takes place before you were born. Do any research, or did being in *Slums of Beverly Hills*, which also took place in the '70s, help you with the time frame?

**N:** It definitely helped but the characters were so different. Christine's impression of the '70s would have been so different from Vivian's. Vivian's no party girl; she's the complete opposite, she's [about] family life and dealing with all the basic things. This was a little more difficult because there's no real back-story and it's really only two scenes with dialogue. It was more about getting her attitude and how she would talk.

**G:** Did the costume you wore help you get into it?

**N:** Absolutely, that whole fake rabbit fur sort of thing and big stilettos. But I think what helped the most was listening to the music. I listened to "Christine Sixteen" off the *Love Gun* album—my role was to bring that song to life. I made sure I had all the KISS albums for

inspiration and I watched the movie *Thank God It's Friday* and I watched *Saturday Night Fever* a bunch of times. And if Cher would come on TV I'd watch it. I'd listen to '70s disco hits albums.

**G:** Were you a KISS fan, or aware of them before you made the movie?

**N:** Absolutely. I have these shoes I've been wearing for the last three years and people have been constantly making fun of me, like what do I think I am, in KISS? Now I can say yes.

**G:** Have you seen them live?

**N:** Yeah I did, I saw them play on Halloween. That rocked.

**G:** Is it true you were debating whether to take the role and Gene Simmons convinced you at his birthday party?

**N:** I think I was the first person to sign on to the movie. I went to this meeting and I'm trying to get the job and I'm thinking, "This is going to be the last cool movie of the millennium," and seeing that it was the KISS movie I was all exhilarated. Then they invited me down to Gene Simmons' strip club birthday party, and I show up in leather. I was good to go. As soon as I walk in, Gene walks up to me and puts a baseball hat on my head and starts talking to me. Someone else walks up to him from Fox Searchlight, who says, "Do you know Natasha Lyonne? She was in our movie." And he goes, "Of course I know Natasha Lyonne, she is in MY movie." I felt like I was the shit. It was hot. They tried to get me to strip dance and I said, "You know man, that's cool, but I don't really need the lap dance, it's not really my style."

**G:** Since your scenes were shot early, you weren't there when they did the concert scene.

**N:** No, I wasn't there for that much of it, which was kind of a bummer. But I definitely got some good friends from this. Me and Ed [Furlong] and Jimmy [DeBello] are all good friends. We all liked hanging out a lot there and still like hanging out here [in L.A.]. Melanie [Lynskey], too, I did another movie with Melanie after that.

**G:** You've made a few films since *Detroit Rock City*. Can you fill me in?

**N:** Directly from there I went to Vancouver to make this movie called *Confessions of a Trickbaby*. It's basically about a girl who's a bulimic convict. She escapes life in prison and goes on the run with her sidekick who's a sex offender. They both have life sentences. Her sidekick knows this nun in Mexico named Sister Gomez who turns out to be Vincent Gallo in drag. There are lots of bullets and it's like *Hansel & Gretel* but really f.cked up.

**G:** Who's the director?

**N:** Matthew Bright, who directed *Freeway*. Hopefully it will get a distributor. It's got some pretty classic



Born on April 4, 1979, Lyonne is from New York and still lives there, staying with friends when she's in L.A. "I don't hate it like I used to," she says of the latter, which "made no sense" to her at first. "There was so much Hollywood stress. You watch commercials and it's like auditioning for movies. 'Why didn't I go out on that Taco Bell commercial, I could play a better Chihuahua than that!' she cracks. "Now, because I think I've been doing it a little longer, with a bit more success, I have a little bit less stress about it. And I have friends who are in the business and they make it seem more like an art, a fun thing as opposed to just work."



# DRC's CAST ★ DRC's CAST

stuff in it. I did a movie after that called *But I'm a Cheerleader*. I play this Christian cheerleader from a really proper family, her parents are [played by] Bud Cort and Mink Stole. She comes home one day after cheerleading and finds all her family and friends there—they're doing an intervention because they think she's gay. They send her off to rehab and she doesn't understand why. She's a naïve Christian cheerleader. So she goes to homosexual rehab and falls in love and becomes gay.

**G: Melanie's in that.**

**N:** Yeah. And Jimmy's in *American Pie*, which I did before *Detroit Rock City*. It's a really funny movie. I'm the only character who doesn't have sex. I'm the old wise one who has had sex so I don't mess around with high school boys. I just give advice. I tell them what sex is all about and how to go along.

**G: Are there more?**

**N:** There was one movie I was supposed to do but the financing fell out, a little independent. [*When Autumn Leaves*]. We're still trying to make it. I went off and did *Detroit Rock City* and *American Pie*, and the director, my good friend Zoe Clark Williams, did a movie for MGM. But we hope to do this in January.

**G: You've been alternating between big studio movies and small independent films. Is that by design?**

**N:** It's not really, I just like to go with the natural wave of things.

**G: What attracts you to a part—the script, the character, the director?**

**N:** It's usually a combination of script, director, and co-star.

**G: Anyone in particular you'd like to work with actors or directors?**

**N:** There's lots of people. Gena Rowlands. Classic [directors] like Scorsese, Lars Von Trier, Mike Leigh.

**G: Do you have a preference between comedy and drama?**

**N:** My favorite movies are a combination of the two. In real life it's the same way, everything that's funny is dramatic and vice versa. The Coen brothers do that really well, they have a really interesting story going on but there are absurd things. I'm more of an absurdist than a comedic or a dramatic person. I really like Ionesco's stuff and stuff like that, that throws you

back a bit. It's a comedy but it's a lot more than that. Sophisticated comedy is really what I like.

**G: Do you write at all?**

**N:** I've tried writing a couple of times. I've got ideas. It's really hard, though. I really respect writers and directors because it's a really hard job. It takes a lot of focus and dedication and it's a lot easier said than done. It's a lot easier to come up with a concept than put it all down. My goal is to work with people who are really good and since I'm not going to college they'll be giving me an education just being in their presence.

**G: You've already decided not to go?**

**N:** I ended up skipping my senior year of high school and was enrolled in NYU for film and philosophy. I went for a little bit, but freshman film class...I wanted to do more hands-on stuff. I think if I completed a semester I probably would have learned a lot.

**G: Any thoughts of continuing your studies later?**

**N:** Yeah, something more general that I enjoy, like English or philosophy, and then go to graduate film school. In the mean time I think that self-educating, if you do it with commitment, can be really good, too. I just have to learn what I want to learn and I can still do this. At some point in my life I hope to go back to college. I just want to learn a lot. But it's hard for me because I've never really been a school person. I've never liked staying in class and being told what to do. I don't like sitting with a bunch of strangers and asking them for their notes and trying to cheat off their papers. Acting is something that's an education in its own way because film is really interesting to me.

**G: You get something new out of each experience.**

**N:** Absolutely.

**G: Did you ever act in plays?**

**N:** I did, in high school I did a lot of stage work and summer camp, but professionally I've never done anything. Actually I've been trying to get a production of one of Ionesco's plays going. I want to do this one called *The Lesson*. It's about an older man who eats his students. I want to do it with someone like Alan Arkin or Peter Falk or Ben Gazzara.

**G: How about TV?**

**N:** I was on *Peewee's Playhouse*. That was my first



"I'm just a pawn in the game of KISS," Lyonne, on location with good friend Edward Furlong here, sums up her place in the world of *Detroit Rock City*. Her favorite scene? "Eddie's strip scene, definitely. It's hysterical."

thing. That was rockin'! I don't see how I'm gonna top *Peewee's Playhouse*. Any TV I do is never gonna live up to that classic. There were originally 13 episodes and I was in nine of them.

**G: How did you break into that? Did you always want to do this as a child?**

**N:** It was more like an extracurricular activity because I had excess energy. A hyperactive kid. I think that's why mom got me mixed up in it. It just seemed like a logical...I was a loudmouthed kid. I was bouncing off the walls. And I don't know if they had Ritalin back then. I remember I went on my first audition, Strawberry Shortcake and I cried.

**G: You didn't get it?**

**N:** Right. My second audition was for Minute Maid and I got it. It was pretty smooth, and I continued it because I enjoyed it. But it was more of a hobby. Then when I got into high school and started hating everyone around me, it became a stream in my head, "Some day I'll show all you evil motherfckers." I get a lot of satisfaction now because these kids were such obnoxious brats and they were so mean to me. My mom was a single parent and they were really rich private school kids and I was a scholarship kid. I did

continued on page 66



"I would love to be talented enough to be a rock star," says Lyonne, for whom *DRC* was the next closest thing. "Getting to live out that fantasy, to be involved in the rock 'n' roll world, it's a whole different trip." A fan of classic rock like Jimi Hendrix and Led Zeppelin, and modern music including Beck, Radiohead, and Marilyn Manson, Lyonne, with director Adam Rifkin here, has seen the latter in concert a few times but more often spends her spare time reading, watching movies, and staying fit by "rocking with the Ab Roller" and lifting weights.



# DRC's CAST ★ DRC's CA

## MELANIE LYNKEY

### "Beth"

■ How does a New Zealander who lives in London end up playing all-American Beth Bumstein in *Detroit Rock City*? It's been an unexpected but wonderful journey for Melanie Lynskey, whose big break came opposite Kate Winslet in the disturbing drama *Heavenly Creatures*. Since then, she's appeared as Drew Barrymore's nice stepsister in *Ever After* and filmed the dark comedy *But I'm a Cheerleader* with *DRC* castmate Natasha Lyonne. The busy young actress talked about these roles and others during a visit to Los Angeles earlier this year.

**G: How did you become involved in acting?**

**M:** I was in high school and people were casting a movie and they auditioned 600 actresses. I was 15. They went to high schools in desperation. I always wanted to go to drama school and all that but all of a sudden I was doing this movie, *Heavenly Creatures*. I was 18 when it came out.

**G: it was your big break**

**M:** Yeah it was. I wasn't expecting that at the age of 18. I'm 21 now. All of a sudden I was coming over here and going to New York when I had time off from school. It was a weird contrast. It was crazy. But it was amazing. I'm so lucky to have done that film. I took a couple of years to decide whether I could handle it, being here in the international film world.

**G: A big change from New Zealand?**

**M:** Yeah, but I love it. I find it really exciting. I just needed to have enough inner strength. I'd love to have a career that lasts forever and I don't believe you can work when you're not secure in yourself or what you don't know what you're doing. So I thought I'd get myself together.

**G: After that you did a movie with Michael J. Fox.**

**M:** I had a tiny little cameo in that. *The Frighteners*. It was the director of *Heavenly Creatures*.

**G: And *Ever After*. How was working with Drew Barrymore?**

**M:** She's amazing. It's a sweet movie, the only movie I've done that my little sister could watch. She adored it.

**G: Any others?**

**M:** I did a movie version of *The Cherry Orchard*. I played the servant girl, very flighty, sort of sexy, I was in tears the whole time. A Russian ditz. And *Foreign Correspondents*, a little independent film. I play a young American college student who just graduated from college who gets obsessed with a French guy who's sending postcards to someone who used to live in her apartment. It's about living in L.A. and being lonely. It's a big role. *Heavenly Creatures* was as well but very different. Everything I've done has been completely different. I just finished *But I'm a Cheerleader*, a comedy about a

place where gay and Lesbian teenagers are sent to be cured of homosexuality. It's a Lesbian love story. [my character's] obsessed with becoming straight, and I graduate.

**G: You've used an American accent several times so far**

**M:** I find it much easier than English accents.

**G: Did you have a coach?**

**M:** No. When I did *Detroit Rock City* I was living in London so I went to a voice teacher for a few lessons to try and get it back a bit. You hear American accents so much on television it's easy to switch it on.

**G: What was it like on the *Detroit Rock City* set?**

**M:** It was so much fun. It was the only movie I've been on where if someone said, "The producers are going to be here today," you're like "Yeah!" Most of the time [on other movies] you'd be on your best behavior or moping around. Everyone working on this movie was so much fun. I hung out with Sam a lot.

**G: The confessional scene was his first love scene, but not yours.**

**M:** I've done scenes where I had to be making out with someone. I've never done a sex scene, and thankfully they didn't ask for too much writhing. Sam's mother was right there watching. But she was too cool about it. Between takes she'd go, "Don't you think you should be more passionate and kissing each other everywhere?" I thought she'd be more disapproving but she was like "Come on, go for it!" He was so nervous at first and I was nervous because I'm five years older. I'm hoping that I'll pass for 16. But it was actually fun in the end. It's a funny scene, it's not just about that we're having sex. It's sort of fumbling and the police come in and all that.

**G: What about some of the other scenes?**

**M:** All my scenes were with Sam. People have asked me, "What's Eddie Furlong like to work with?" I don't know.

**G: Were you around for the concert scene?**

**M:** No. I wish I'd seen that and I wish I'd been at the cast party. I went back to London.

**G: Did you go to the KISS concert in Buffalo?**

**M:** No. I went to the KISS concert in L.A. on Halloween. I had come back to L.A. for about three weeks. Then I went back and finished. It was incredible.



A native of New Plymouth, New Zealand, Lynskey, born on May 16, 1977, is a doctor's daughter and the eldest of five children. She has three brothers and a sister who, as a "drama queen and very beautiful" may end up following in her footsteps. Her folks had hoped she'd be a doctor or a lawyer, "but luckily I was 16 and working before they had a chance to talk me out of it, and now they're very proud of me."



# Y's CAST



In love with Sam Huntington in *DRC*, Lynsey is involved with another actor off screen. She met Welshman Andrew Howard on the set of *The Cherry Orchard*, his first film.

## G: Your first time seeing them?

**M:** Yeah. I'd been aware of them, I knew who they were and what they looked like, and I knew the songs but not knowing they were *by* them.

## G: Did you research the '70s for your role?

**M:** The scenes in this movie are things that any kid can relate to, it's just a cool added thing that it's in the '70s. I loved that it was, the costumes are great. But I didn't think I needed to do research.

## G: Did you understand the significance of your character's name, Beth?

**M:** It was the only song of theirs I didn't know. There was this record store in Toronto with KISS stuff everywhere and I went with Jimmy [DeBello], and the guy there had met Jimmy before and asked how the movie was going. He said, "This is Melanie, she plays Beth." He laughed and said, "It's the name of their biggest hit." I had no idea. Tim [Sullivan] gave me an adorable Peter Criss teddy bear and CD that had the song on it. It's a beautiful song.

## G: How did you like hearing Peter sing it live?

**M:** I was transfixed.

## G: What other memories stand out from the filming?

**M:** Everything about it was fun. I'm used to extras on movies grumbling and being angry but the extras on this movie turned up because they love the band so much and I saw how devoted they really were. It was freezing cold in the middle of the night when we were shooting and they were happy to be there. They came in costumes and makeup to play people who were going to the concert. I thought that was so great. When I went to the concert at Dodger Stadium and they finished playing and the crowd was going crazy, I looked around at all these people and thought, "Oh my God, we could be in a blockbuster!"

## G: How did you get the role? Did you fly in to audition?

**M:** The casting director saw me in *Ever After* and said I would be good for this part. I was in London, I sent a videotape—they put me on tape over there. Apparently I was the only person who auditioned.

## G: What's next for you?

**M:** I'm doing a British movie in September called *Lily and the Secret Planting*. I'm Lily. She is wonderful, a lovely sort of shy girl and she has a wonderful success with planting flowers. It's a lovely story about her personal growth. The director is a woman called Hettie McDonald. She did a movie called *Beautiful Things*. I don't know who else is in it. It's filming in London, right by my house. It will take me five minutes to get to work every day. I'm still waiting to hear on a few other things. I may be doing a movie in Australia.

## G: What interests you in a project? Is it the script, the role, the people involved?

**M:** All of that comes into it. I try and do things that are different every time so I don't feel like I'm doing the same old thing again.

## G: You've been doing comedies lately.

**M:** I'd like to do something dramatic next. *Heavenly Creatures* was a drama and *Foreign Correspondents*, but then I did three comedy roles in a row. I love comedy so much but if I could choose next time I'd like to do something different.

## G: Is there a particular character you'd like to bring to the screen?

**M:** Hedda Gabler; some totally wild woman. I did a reading recently of a completely amazing script. It's about a woman who's come off heroin and been off it for a year but goes back on and goes crazy. It's great because it shows both sides, I like when there's a journey they go on.

## G: Any directors you'd like to work with?

**M:** Lots of people. I'd love to work with Adam [Rifkin] again. He's so much fun. He looks about 12. I'd work with him anytime. There's an Australian director called Geoffrey Wright I'd like to work with. He did *Romper Stomper* and a movie called *Metal Skin*. Kind of violent. I like people who have a really interesting vision. And the director of *But I'm a Cheerleader*, Jamie Babbit, is incredible. This was her first feature.

## G: How about actors?

**M:** Noah Taylor, he was in *Shine*. I'm obsessed with him. He's Australian as well. Judy Davis, she's Australian, too. Meryl Streep, Susan Sarandon, Kathy

Bates. Billy Bob Thornton, I love him. There was a screening and I saw him afterwards, but I was too nervous to meet him.

## G: Have you been recognized and approached by fans?

**M:** Yeah, sometimes. It's nice when people remember, but I've never looked really pretty in a movie so I think I must be having a bad day when anyone recognizes me. Especially from *Heavenly Creatures* because I look terrible in that film.

## G: What interests do you have apart from acting?

**M:** I write a lot, poetry and short stories and things.

## G: Have you been published?

**M:** A little bit, literary journals in New Zealand but not anything major.

## G: Any interest in writing scripts?

**M:** Yeah maybe. It's a whole other thing to me and it's so difficult. I'd love to some day.

## G: Interested in theater at all?

**M:** I only did a little bit of theater. It's not really my strength.

## G: What about television?

**M:** I wouldn't really want to commit myself to a series. It's such a long time, like six years or something. To be playing one character for that long would drive me crazy. Things like *Friends* where you can really see the ensemble thing working and everyone has a great working vibe...but if you get on a series that's popular you get known as this one character. I'd love to do a guest spot on a television show. I love television. I watch *Frasier* and I used to love *Seinfeld*.

## G: And a series would mean moving to the States.

**M:** I know. I can't bring myself to leave London. And I've never learned to drive. People think I'm crazy when I tell them. •

Lynsey has been a vegetarian since she was 10 and watched a "horrible documentary" about the slaughter of animals. "My parents thought it was a phase. I can't imagine eating meat now. I can't remember what it was like." She exercises "a bit because I have to," but isn't really into sports. She spends her spare time seeing movies, and names *Shakespeare in Love*, *Life is Beautiful*, and *Elizabeth* as recent favorites.





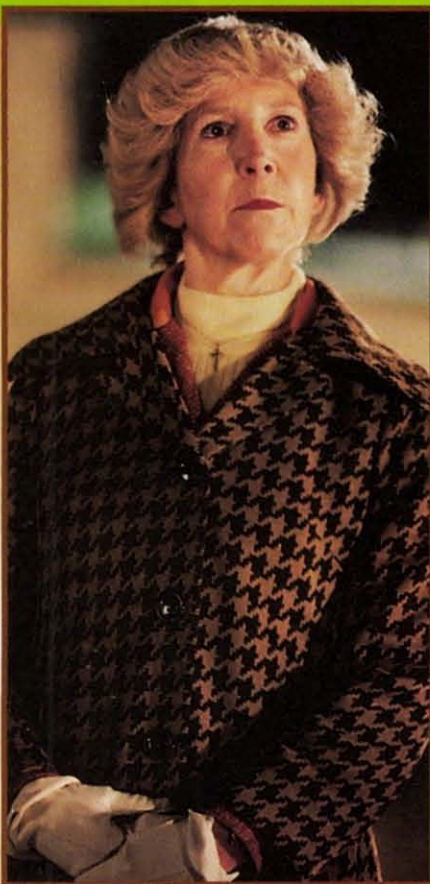
# LYN SHAYE

## "Mrs. Bruce"

■ Over the past 28 years, Lin Shaye has appeared in nearly 50 film and TV roles playing everything from nurses to nannies to moms of every stripe, making a memorable impression more recently as the landlady in *Kingpin* and wacky neighbor Magda in *There's Something About Mary*. In *Detroit Rock City*, she's back in mother mode with a vengeance as Mrs. Bruce, the stern, chain-smoking anti-KISS crusader who burns her son's cherished concert tickets. Off screen, Shaye, who was born and raised in Detroit, is the mother of a 10 year-old who has become a KISS fan, and she doesn't mind in the least. "They're fabulous," raves Shaye, who became particularly fond of *DRC* producer Gene Simmons. "He's fantastic, he's kind, he's completely on target. He has one of these minds that goes a thousand miles an hour and never skips a beat." When she called him to tell him how excited she was about the movie and about her son Lee J's interest in the band, the next day "a FedEx box appeared at the door full of KISS stuff." Shaye feels the same about her director and co-stars, as she revealed in a recent conversation.

### G: Did you enjoy making the movie?

L: It was a wonderful experience. Adam Rifkin was terrific. He runs a very low key but energetic ship. He's a tireless worker. He keeps everything on an even keel and he's completely open to any questions and solving the problems of the scene and for an actor that's terrific. He allows you to be really creative. And the guys were a real hoot, all of them. They're all real actors, and they really put it out and give back. They were all so great to work with. Sam, my son, was wonderful. Most of my scenes were with him and we really hit it off. He's a real professional. He's one of these actors who is aware of everything around him. He's not so impressed by his own presence that he forgets there are other people in the scene and other elements to work out. I was kind of touched, I had a lot of props I was dealing with, like the cigarettes, and he was looking out for me to make sure I had it out. And Mrs. Bruce is a wonderful character. I'm so happy with it. I think we really created a three dimensional mom, and that was my biggest job. Even Carl Dupré admitted to me that on the page she's just angry, a bitch. But I am a mom, and I tried to go into the reality of what this is all about for her. I can see how incredibly difficult it could be. Mrs. Bruce believes her point of view is the right one and she's a control freak in that way. But it's a tremendously difficult thing for a parent to acknowledge change and let go of their kid. I have that to look forward to. At the end, I took the liberty of adding the line, "They grow up fast don't they?" and it was a very poignant moment, realizing I'm not going to change, he's moving forward



Shaye had fun shopping while on location in Toronto. "I have more leather coats than I'll ever need in a lifetime," she says. On the other hand, "My character's wardrobe, I left there."

and I have to let go and that's what every parent faces. Carl thanked me and said it was the perfect cap for that scene and the character. He did a phenomenal job with the writing. And the fast-paced, angular style that Adam chose to shoot the film...one early review said it didn't seem like a movie about the '70s but a movie made in the '70s. It has a real almost documentary feel about it. It takes you in completely.

### G: Any favorite scenes?

L: I love the scenes where the kids are in the car, singing the disco. I love the pizza place, and the scene in the bar where Eddie does his dance. And the scene between Jam and I, the last scene we have together. I loved the guys racing from the school to the car and the entry to the school, with the gargoyles. It has so much style. Steve Hardie did a great job.

G: Unlike the kids in it, you were actually

around in the '70s. Did filming bring back any memories?

L: 1978 I had just come out to Los Angeles, actually the end of '77. I'm a Motown girl. My music was not so much KISS but '60s stuff, rock stuff, all the stuff that was happening in San Francisco. I love the old rhythm and blues like Howlin' Wolf and Muddy Waters, that's my favorite. And '60s rock like the Who and the Beatles and the Stones and Crosby Stills & Nash. I knew of KISS and I was very taken by the dramatic aspect of their performances. I had never seen them live but I'd seen them on TV. In the '70s I was in a big period of transition and wasn't as caught up in the pop culture as with my own personal stuff, to tell you the truth. I lived in New York for almost 14 years, doing lots and lots of theater, non-stop. I only did one film in New York, *Hester Street*. It's a terrific movie, Carol Kane, and Steven Keats, directed by Joan Micklin Silver. I played a Polish prostitute. I had a couple scenes and the end credits read, Lin Shaye—Whore. My mother was so upset she walked out of the theater and threw up. That was my entrée into the film business. But back to your question, the '70s were a time of transition for me and this movie is about transition, too, so I was in an appropriate place. I was growing into something new then and so are these kids.

G: How did you get the part? I know your brother, Bob Shaye, is President at New Line.

L: He didn't know I had an audition for this. I came in and auditioned like any other actor. But what I didn't know and Barry Levine and Tim Sullivan told me later, they said, "If you just came in and sat there we still wanted you for the role." They'd seen...*Mary* and knew about me from *Kingpin* and were huge fans.

G: ...*Mary* really moved you to another level.

L: Yes. The secret behind it was *Kingpin*. After...*Mary* came out all the *Kingpin* freaks felt comfortable to reveal themselves. I get stopped more for *Kingpin*. When people find out I've done both they can't believe it. Which is great. It makes me so happy.

G: As a character actress, you're a chameleon.

L: And I'm going to continue to do that. I love it, I'm open to anything and I think this movie will move me into yet another category. I created a niche for myself, I think.

G: Did you always want to do this?

L: Yes. But I didn't know, it wasn't, "Oh I want to be a movie star." I never thought that. We didn't have



a lot of kids living around me. I'd take all my clothes out of the closet, stand in front of the mirrored French doors, put on the clothes, and make up different voices and put on a play. And I'd continue it the next day. It was the way I expressed myself. I did it from the time I was really small. It's something I've always been good at. I know how to transform somehow. It's like stepping into a tornado a little bit and once you're in it nothing can be wrong.

**G: How did you translate the desire to doing it professionally?**

**L:** I was always in school plays, from kindergarten on. I went to the University of Michigan and I always did plays at school. They had a wonderful theater department, but I was an art history major. The acting was something I did on the side. I was always in shows, like *Bye Bye Birdie*, *Wonderful Town*. When I finished college I thought I'd go to do a year in London. I applied to art school but didn't get in. I went with my parents anyway and met up with a girlfriend on the Spanish Steps in Rome. I stayed with her for a month and then took off on my own. I ended up getting a job at a small theater in the West End. First I worked on some poetry readings up in Edinburgh, all because I met a guy while I was sitting having lunch one day. This guy says, "Are you an American? Are you looking for a job?" and I said, "Yeah." He said, "I'm a poet. Here's the number to call and a place where you can stay." And it was all on the up and up and I'm still friends with this man today. I introduced him to my husband and my son in London last summer. When I came back from London I thought I'd go to graduate school for theater. I went to Columbia in New York and that fed into the Off Broadway and Off Off Broadway scene. I can't live without it. I hope I give as much, and I know I do, and I think that's my success, to tell you the truth.

**G: You've created some memorable characters**

**L:** So far, so good. I hope there's many, many more.

**G: What about a part attracts you? Is it a combination of script, director, and character?**

**L:** It's definitely a combination of things. If I know there's a wonderful director working on something...Neil LaBute, who did *Your Friends and Neighbors*, is doing a movie and it wasn't a great part but I wanted to work with him so bad. I didn't get it and I was really disappointed.

**G: Which other directors would you like to work with?**

**L:** Mike Nichols, Woody Allen, Nora Ephron, Elaine May, Spielberg, Ron Howard, Rob Reiner, Steven Freers, the Coen brothers. Paul Thomas Anderson. Tim Burton.

**G: Actors?**

**L:** De Niro. Who wouldn't? Joan Cusack, I like her and appreciate where she's coming from. Meryl Streep. Amy Madigan, Ed Harris. These are all people from the theater.



An animal lover (she has a horse, three cats, and a dog), Shaye (with Sam Huntington here) lives in L.A. with her son Lee J. and husband, actor Clayton Landey, who'll be in *Wish You Were Dead* with her, though not in the same scenes. "He's been on *The Practice*, *Sliders*, *Walker: Texas Ranger*. He did three years on *Knots Landing* and did all the nighttime soaps like *Dynasty* and *Falcon Crest*. You'd probably recognize his face," she says.

**G: Do you think that training rounds an actor out more?**

**L:** Absolutely. You think about the role in a different way. Theater training is more extensive. I was taught to work with objects, to think about the beginning, middle and end of a scene, the arc of a scene. The first day I worked on *Detroit Rock City* was the scene with Sam in the bedroom where I'm telling him to hurry and get ready for school and he's trying to hide the KISS tickets. It was a long scene for a film scene. I approached it like it was a scene in a play and as soon as I did that I found my behavior, the sweep of the scene, the arc of the scene. And I found what was happening in my relationship to my son. If I had no theater training I might have been at sea.

**G: Do you want to do more stage work?**

**L:** Later. I want to do movies now.

**G: What's next?**

**L:** I'm going to do the Farrelly Brothers' next movie. It's going to be a small role, just a few scenes but they're with Jim Carrey. I'm really excited to work with him. Renee Zellweger is the lead in it. It's called *Me, Myself and Irene*. Then I'm doing an independent film, through New Line, and again, my brother didn't know about it. It's called *Wish You Were Dead*. It's a dark comedy written by Scott Firestone. It will be directed by Valerie McCaffery who is New Line's casting director. It will star Catherine O'Hara and Rose McGowan. I play a manicurist but I don't know

too much about her yet. I'm ready to rock and roll, as Gene would say.

**G: You've done a lot of comedies. Do you prefer it to drama?**

**L:** I love comedy. You can't live without laughter. It's a high form of art. But I'd love to do drama, too and I think I'm equally strong on both. My emotions are right on the surface.

**G: Are you interested in TV?**

**L:** After *Detroit Rock City* I auditioned for a lot of guest star stuff and consistently came in second. I tested for one TV pilot and I wasn't sad I didn't get it. I was up for a part in a Joan Cusack pilot but it relocates to Chicago. But I have my son and the idea of signing a seven year contract...it didn't go very far and that was OK.

**G: What are you proudest of?**

**L:** *Kingpin*. They didn't want to see me for the role. They said, "You're too young, you're too attractive." Everyone was saying no and finally at the last minute I called and said "I've worked out this whole presentation, please see me." And he said OK. And I came in and knocked their socks off.

**G: That must have felt good.**

**L:** It did. I look at those scenes and I laugh myself to tears. It's still my favorite thing I've ever done. ...*Mary* is a very close second. *Detroit Rock City* is going to be up there. I think it's going to be huge. •



"I've been so lucky," says Shaye (at the DRC wrap party here with Adam Rifkin and Sam Huntington's mom Chris), who has always had the support of her family in her career. Her 87 year-old father, who still lives in Detroit, "has been one of my most wonderful supporters in my career and I really cherish that. That makes you able to fly. It's really wonderful and it feels good to be able to give that back."



# EDWARD FURLONG

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tell. Probably going to school or something. I've been pretty lucky.

**G: Do you think you'd like to continue your education?**

**E:** I'd definitely love to go to school. I've taken a couple of classes here and there. I took an astronomy class. I like that stuff. It's kind of hard to take classes though; you have to give up working.

**G: What were you like when you were in high school?**

**E:** I didn't go so much to high school since I was in the business already. I had a lot of set school. But I graduated.

**G: Were you treated differently by kids in school because you were in movies?**

**E:** When I went back to school after *T2*, yeah, naturally. But not really in my world, with my friends.

**G: Sometimes child actors have trouble making the transition to adult roles. What do you think the key to that is?**

**E:** I don't know, I'm still trying to figure that out for myself. Fame or success in this business is a strange thing. I don't know if it's talent, or how hard you work at it, or what roles you pick. I

think it's all about being at the right place at the right time.

**G: Looking back would you do anything differently?**

**E:** I wouldn't do anything differently. I'm pretty happy with what I've done.

**G: Where do you see yourself going in the future? Do you want to direct, or write?**

**E:** Well, I want to act forever but right now I don't think I'm ready to take on the responsibility of directing. But I like to write. That will be a ways down the line. Someday, definitely. Right now I'm just living life. We'll see what happens.

**G: Which of your roles so far do you most identify with?**

**E:** I identify with all the characters I play to some degree 'cause it's me. Everything that I do is driven by some experience that I've had, or whatever. I'm playing me in that kind of circumstance, that kind of world.

**G: Do any of your film experiences stand out to you more vividly?**

**E:** Probably *Little Odessa*, because it was one of my favorites in terms of shoots, filming the movie. It was probably the most intimate movie I worked on. We didn't have soundstages. We filmed it all outside in Brighton Beach [New York]. It was freezing.

**G: And *Detroit Rock City*?**

**E:** It's definitely different in a lot of ways from other films I've done. It's a mainstream movie and a good one. I'm proud to be part of it. It's a good movie, an adventure movie.

**G: I hear that you and Natasha Lyonne developed a closer relationship than just a working one. Is it still going on?**

**E:** Yeah, we're really close.

**G: Did you connect right away?**

**E:** Yeah, right away. She's a really cool person to hang out with and we became instant good friends.

**G: Do you find it easier to relate to another actor in a relationship as opposed to someone not in show business?**

**E:** Most of my friends are in the business, but very few are actors. They're good people.

**G: Would you and Natasha like to work on another project together?**

**E:** I'd love to do a movie with Natasha. Maybe one day we'll do something.

**G: You've worked with Meryl Streep, Liam Neeson, Ed Norton. Who did you learn the most from?**

**E:** You learn a lot from every movie. It's hard to pick one. I've been really lucky because I've worked with a lot of really talented people.

**G: What goals do you set now?**

**E:** Probably my biggest goal is to one day be able make my own projects, write and direct something. Tough job, though. My perfect idea for a career is to do what I'm doing now forever. I'd like to do a variety of things, sometimes big, sometimes small.

**G: What are you proudest of?**

**E:** Probably something in the future. •

# NATASHA LYONNE

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n't fit in and they really abused me. In time [acting] became my thing. I always really loved movies and they were an escape for me. But I really consider my career starting at 16 when I did the Woody Allen movie [*Everyone Says I Love You*]. That was when I started to understand how much work was involved.

**G: How'd you get that part?**

**N:** I did like six auditions, with Woody there.

**G: How was it working with him?**

**N:** Amazing. I don't think I grasped that much because it was my first real part, with real actors and a real director, and I was really intimidated so I don't think I grasped fully what was going on. It was the first time without my mom there—she was there sometimes but not all the time. It's weird, I'll be working on a scene now and Woody's voice will start ringing in my ears. "Focus on the work, don't put the audience to sleep." That's what's amazing about working with someone who's a genius, you really learn something.

**G: Want to work with him again?**

**N:** I'd love to.

**G: Was your mom in show business?**

**N:** She was a dancer when she was younger, bal-

let and stuff. I have one brother. He kind of toyed with it but never took it seriously. Last time we spoke he had one of those stockbroker things going but before that he had bought a gym in South Beach [in Miami], so I try to ask no questions.

**G: What goals do you set for yourself?**

**N:** Try to enjoy myself and don't take this shit too seriously. Try to like myself, stay inspired, not get apathetic too often. Hopefully make a couple of movies that I'm proud of and enjoy watching.

**G: Which one are you proudest of so far?**

**N:** *Slums of Beverly Hills* is the one I can actually watch without cringing. It was definitely the movie that changed my career. I really liked the other actors in that movie a lot. Alan Arkin and Kevin Corrigan who's actually in *Detroit*, he's one of the guys at the chop shop that are about to rape me. Anyway, it was a great cast in that movie. I talk to them every now and then. I really like all of them. And Tamara [Jenkins] really taught me a lot. I just learned a lot on that movie. I had to work really hard. Working really hard and actually having a product that's satisfying is a great surprise. It feels really good, because you never know what these things are gonna turn out like.

**G: Have any of the films you've done really changed in the edit?**

**N:** I haven't seen the finished product of *Cheerleader* or *Trickbaby*, the two independents I did.

**G: How about *American Pie*?**

**N:** I was definitely pleasantly surprised. It's not a teen movie; it's a really funny classic comedy. I was like, "How is this gonna turn out? Will it be a dumb teen movie I would never see?" That's not what it turned out to be at all and I was really happy about that. Eugene Levy, that guy from *Waiting for Guffman*, is in it and this new guy Jason Biggs is in it and the two of them together are just hysterical. It's a really funny movie and I think that out of all these teen movies it will be the one that has longevity. It's a real classic movie. It's not like some bullshit teen movie. It's gonna break a bunch of careers. It's really funny stuff.

**G: Do you think the same of *Detroit Rock City*?**

**N:** I don't see *Detroit Rock City* as a teen movie, I see it as a KISS movie. It's not about a couple of kids in high school. It's about four guys with a goal. They have a mission, and it's fun to watch the mission get f.cked up along the way. They meet so many weird people and have these strange adventures. I think the texture of the film is great. It looks like an authentic '70s movie but it has all these really great camera moves. It's a believable story and the guys in it are really great. It's like this rock 'n' roll adventure through the '70s. You get to see them from home to school to the road and being wild on their own. But it's not at all a '90s movie. It has a whole other thing to it, which is cool. It's what I was hoping it would be and it is. •





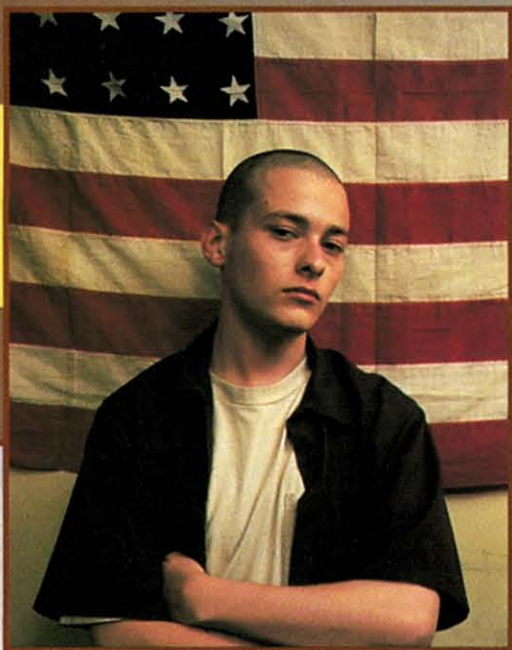


# THE CAST IN THE PAST®

## Where You've Seen *DRC*'s Stars

by Gerri Miller

If *Detroit Rock City*'s faces look familiar, it's no wonder—most of them have been on screen before in films you've probably seen in theaters or on video. Here's a few of their choicest credits.



Debating in 1991 as young John Connor in *Terminator 2: Judgment Day*, Edward Furlong has more recently portrayed a young man implicated in the death of his girlfriend in *Before and After* (1996) with John Heard, Liam Neeson, and Meryl Streep, and last year as Edward Norton's Neo-Nazi skinhead brother Danny in *American History X* and in the title role in *Pecker*.



Sam Huntington got his first screen exposure as Mimi-Siku in *Jungle 2 Jungle*, which had something in common with his role as DRC's Jam: he had to wear hair extensions, something he hopes to avoid in future roles.



Although she's been acting for 28 years, Lin Shaye has gotten the most attention for her recent roles as landlady Mrs. Dumars in *Kingpin* (1996) and as the hypertanned neighbor Magda in *There's Something About Mary*. As the latter character, she appears on a greeting card that pictures her "looking out the window with nothing on but a shirt around my shoulders and my boom-booms looming out at you. On the inside it says, 'Let it all hang out! Happy Birthday.'" And yes, she gave approval, "because it's not me, it's Magda. But it's still kind of neat," says Shaye, who has trouble picking out a favorite *Mary* scene. "Matt Dillon resuscitating the dog, Ben [Stiller] with the zipper, and I love the fight scene with the dog, which Ben choreographed himself. It's a masterpiece of physical comedy."







Giuseppe Andrews can be seen in the early present-day scenes in *Pleasantville* (1998), chowing down with schoolmate Tobey Maguire. He's also in the current comedy *American Pie*.

Melanie Lynskey made her film debut as Pauline Parker opposite Kate Winslet in *Heavenly Creatures* (1994), about a friendship that grows more and more twisted. "I kind of had a love scene with Kate," says Melanie, for whom the Lesbian theme continues in the forthcoming *But I'm a Cheerleader*, starring DRC's Natasha Lyonne. For the record, she does have a boyfriend, an actor she met doing a film adaptation of *The Cherry Orchard*. Lynskey is recognized more for a smaller role, nice stepsister Jacqueline in *Ever After* with Drew Barrymore. Megan Dodds played the wicked one.





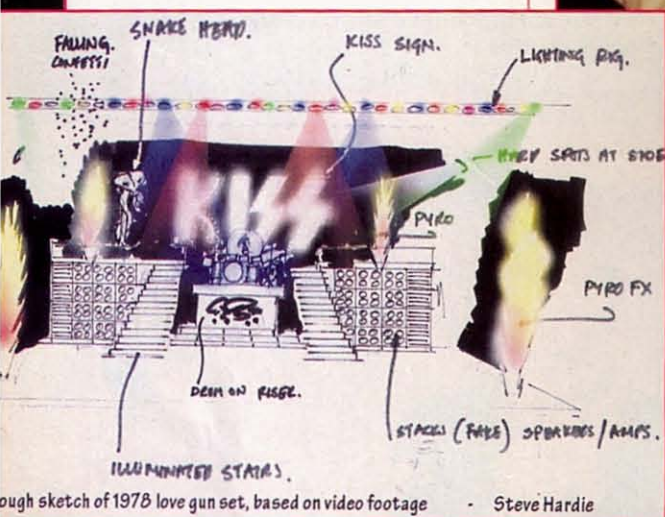
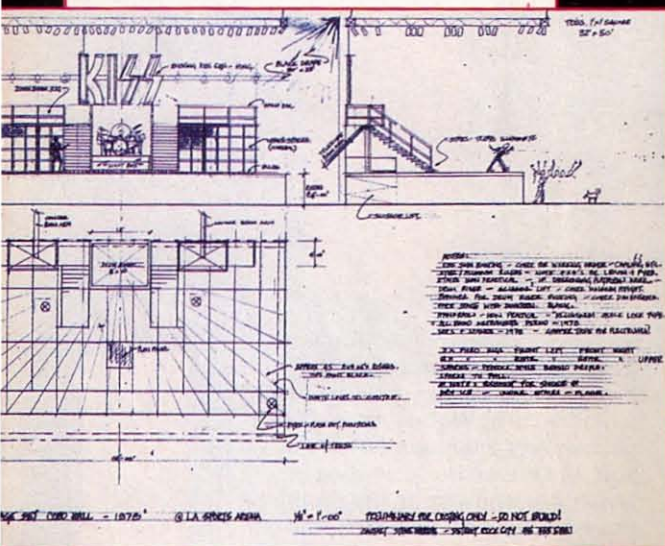


Natasha Lyonne played Richard Dreyfuss' daughter Shelly in Krippendorf's *Tribe* and boy-crazy narrator DJ in Woody Allen's musical comedy *Everyone Says I Love You*, but it was her portrayal of Vivian Abramowitz in *The Slums of Beverly Hills* (in which she starred with Alan Arkin and Jessica Walter) that won her raves and higher profile roles. She can currently be seen as Jessica in the teen sex comedy *American Pie*.





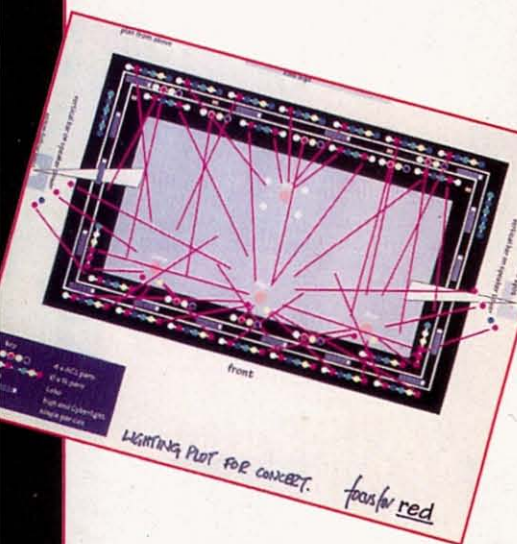
On the set with Gene here, Hardie relied on producer Simmons for one-of-a-kind KISS collectibles.



rough sketch of 1978 love gun set, based on video footage

Steve Hardie

Blueprints and rendering of KISS Love Gun stage and lighting plot



by Gerri Miller

**STEVE HARDIE  
PRODUCTION DESIGNER**

■ His impressive list of credits ranges from *Return of the Jedi*—his first job, as a camera trainee—to the original *Highlander* movie (makeup effects) to one season of *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*. But on *Detroit Rock City*, instead of helping to create future worlds or

supernatural beings, production designer Steve Hardie took on the assignment of recreating 1978 two decades later, and faced unique challenges and tricky problems to solve.

"Every day's a challenge on a film," says the British-born Hardie, whose involvement with *DRC* stems from his prior work with director Adam Rifkin on *Denial* the year before. That said, *DRC* posed some especially tough ones, start-



# Designing DETROIT

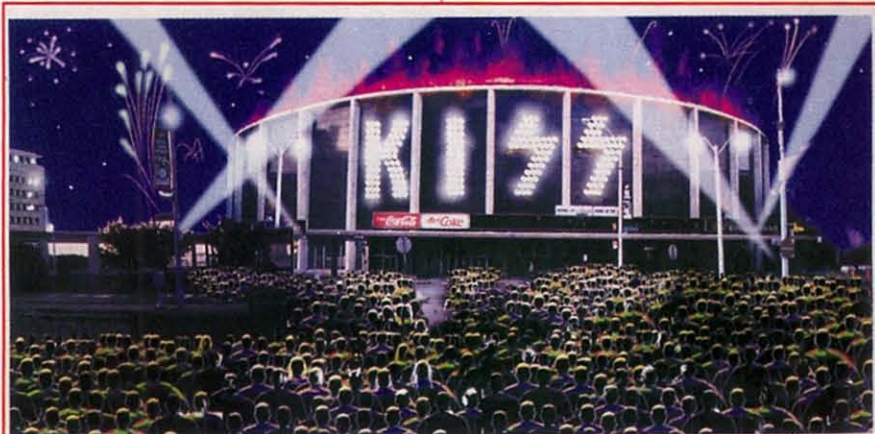


ing with filming on location in Toronto, Canada. "I've worked in all sorts of places and Toronto doesn't have prop houses like here in L.A.," says Hardie, who now lives in Hollywood. He worked with a local set decorator, who helped obtain items at antique stores and thrift shops that sold items from 1978. "We requested certain items over the Internet. We had KISS fanatics get us things like the towel," used to hurriedly cover items the gang doesn't want Mrs. Bruce to see.

Finding vehicles of the period that looked new was another formidable task. "We needed about 200 cars of the '70s. In California, older cars keep better because of the weather, but not in Toronto. Neil Montgomery, the transportation coordinator, was able to track down a lot of cars," many of which were needed for a traffic jam. Also, "The script called for a 1978 Volvo 242DL. It was one of the first Volvos that came over from Sweden," Hardie notes. "We needed two identical Volvos to save time, because one has to go on a car rig, with its tires low so it looks like it's on the road, and the other has to have the tires pumped up normally. They were bought locally, and repainted to look new. We had to buy

National Exhibition Center, to substitute for the exterior of Cobo Hall. "We put up 35 foot high signs that said KISS with 500 or 600 lightbulbs on the side of the building."

The concept for how the exterior of Cobo Hall would look (actually shot in Toronto) and the plan for the sign, comprised of 25' letters.



Guys arrive at Cobo Hall - Detroit - Night

To get it right, "I looked at a lot of video footage, I went through *KISSTORY* page by page. It became an invaluable bible," Hardie says. "Mine looks like it's 10 years old, there are Post-its all over it. Gene gave it to me before we went to Toronto and I didn't know how useful it would be. He gave me video footage from 1978 as well. We looked at two cassettes, two nights from Houston to see the stage set."

Originally, says Hardie, "We thought that the *Love Gun* stage was in storage at KISS'



from the L.A. Sports Arena to the Copps Coliseum in Hamilton, Ontario turned out to be an advantage.

"We could use our same crew, which made it easier and cheaper, and better for me since I like to be on top of everything. I couldn't be in two places at once."

Because the concert scene is the big climax of the movie, "It had to do in what song

what normally would be done over a whole concert," Hardie explains. "We had to make mechanical balconies that descend. We used KISS' pyrotechs because of the cost and because KISS were comfortable with them. Four large flame throwers come up, called dragons, pumping fire through the floor

them because there was potential damage from the car chase and we couldn't rent them."

Hardie and his team made a scouting mission to the titular setting of the movie "so we could make Toronto look like Detroit, and found the necessary round building, the Canadian

warehouse. They don't throw anything away so the assumption was it was all still there but it wasn't. We also thought that they were going to put the stage together for us. But at the eleventh hour they couldn't. Not that I minded, but it was a bit of a surprise. We had to start from scratch." As it turned out, moving the concert scene

# Rock City

## How 1978 Came To Life On Screen



# Designing DETROIT ROCK CITY



Hardie's team created flyers, posters, tickets, and backstage passes based on original '78 designs. He also made crew passes for the concert shoot.

throughout the song and make it look spectacular. But we made the two staircases non-practical because no one had to walk on them. That made them less expensive to build. We added to the lighting technology because lighting has come a long way since 1978. But it was touchy for me. Gene wanted punchier lighting so I used it in a way that you never saw it move in the shots so you can't tell. It made it look better, though. The problem with a period film, showing it to a '90s audience, you have to jazz it up a bit," Hardie says. If we had showed it exactly as it was, it might have looked lame." The idea, he says, is to take the period "and adapt it to a more contemporary feeling. If you did it to the letter it would look like a 20 year-old movie."

On a smaller scale, Hardie faced the challenges of designing the movie's other interior sets, including the Smiley-Mart conve-

# KISS

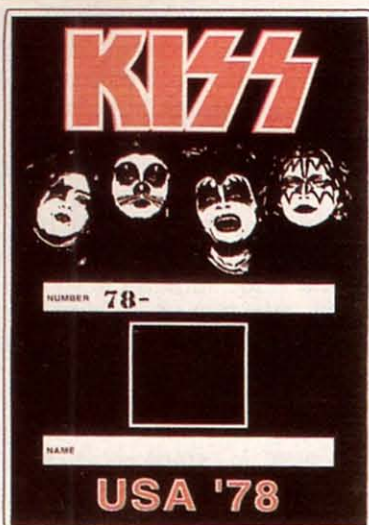


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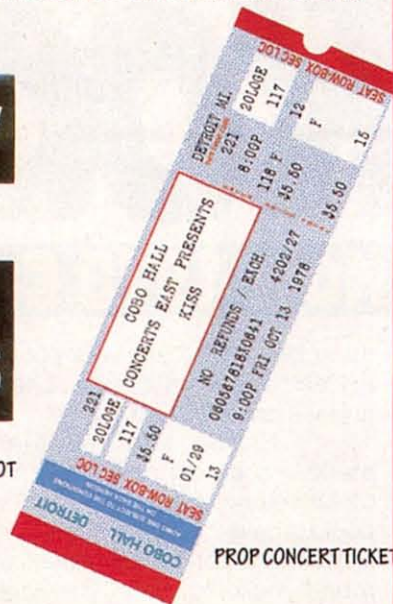
PROP LAMINATE FOR BACKSTAGE EXTRAS



FILM CREW LAMINATES FOR CONCERT SHOOT



FILM CREW LAMINATED PASSES FOR CONCERT SHOOT



PROP CONCERT TICKET



nience store, the basement rehearsal space, and the public and Catholic schools. For the Smiley-Mart, the main problem was that many of the products around in '78 have changed or no longer exist. So Hardie's team had to recreate labels on a computer and re-wrap packages. Many films make "product placement" deals with companies to get items free in exchange for exposure, but said companies are fairly particular about presentation and context. "It isn't really a drug movie, but because of that [companies] didn't want to endorse it. It became very difficult with the legal department at New Line because of clearances," says Hardie, who got around that wherever possible by not focusing on any one package. "The general rule of thumb is if a shot includes more than 10 packages you don't have to clear them. And, because convenience stores weren't as high-tech back then, we filled in the scene with pinball machines, Detroit souvenirs, greeting cards, wrapping paper."

Ironically, the space used during the shoot was an actual



Using a '70s billboard as reference, Hardie built a miniature version that when filmed appears to be full size.

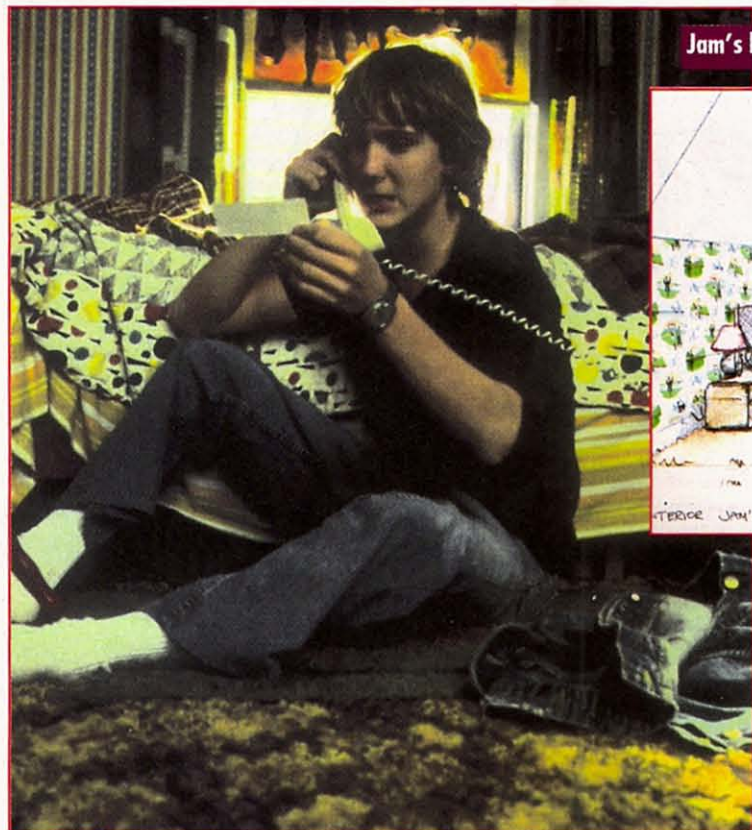


Props like the protesters' banners and backstage ice sculpture were made, but others were borrowed—including the KISS towel Ace holds here. Notes Hardie, "One collector wanted \$300, but we ended up getting one for free from a fan." Terri Rodriguez lent it to the production under the condition that Ace would rub it over his body before it was returned—unwashed—to her.

convenience store that had been shut down—and unexpectedly, gutted. "The deal was they'd leave whatever they could and we would take out what we wanted to. But they left nothing but the shelving so it made it difficult. Even threw out the magazine racks," Hardie sighs. The Smiley-Mart was a "weather cover" set, always on standby to use if bad weather necessitated a switch from an exterior to interior scene. For that reason, explains Hardie, "We needed it for three



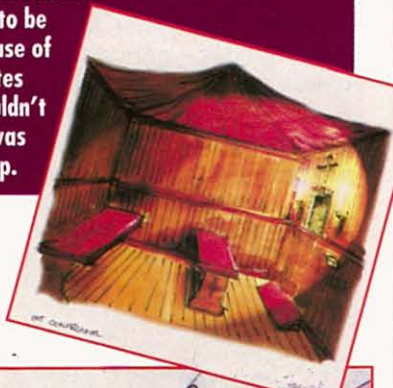




Jam's bedroom, on paper and on screen.



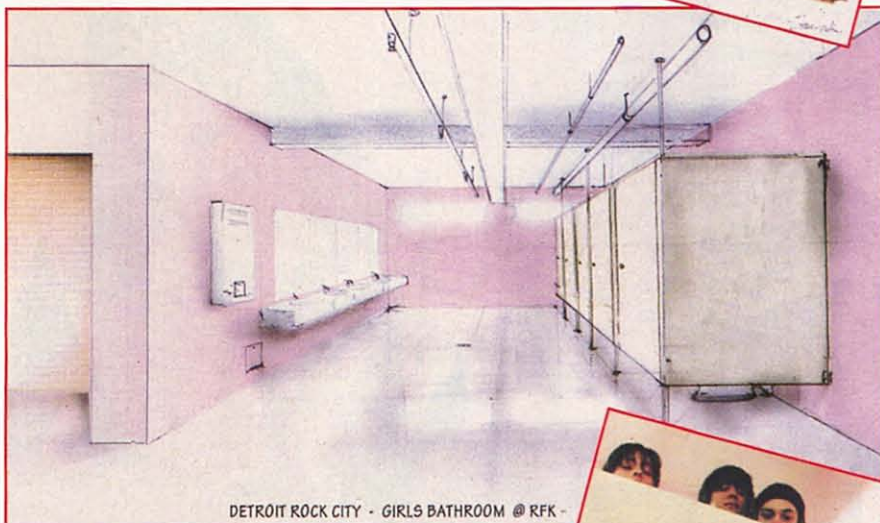
The confessional set was built for two reasons: a real church confessional would have been too small, and it's doubtful that they'd have gotten permission to use one. "This set traveled to three locations to be used as cover in case of bad weather," notes Hardie. If they couldn't shoot outside, it was available as backup.



## Designing DETROIT ROCK CITY

months."

The basement rehearsal space, however, was a soundstage creation. "Basements are very impractical to work in so it was built from scratch with a low ceiling. We used the paneling and exposed brick they used then." Props like a lava lamp, beanbag chair, and numerous KISS items provided the set dressing, the bulk of the latter coming from Gene Simmons' collection including original KISS posters. "I had them all duplicated," says Hardie, who didn't want to ruin the originals and risk the God of Thunder's wrath. Other posters, including Day-Glo and black light ones, came from local shops. "Toronto has great head shops. I got a Farrah [Fawcett] poster at one for about \$30." Other obsolete items weren't that difficult to find. "Eight-track players were plentiful at pawn shops, and one of the prop guys has a vinyl record collection and



The bathroom where the boys spy on Christina Sicoli was built on a soundstage to facilitate filming and accommodate the special effects of the collapsing stalls and gushing water.

was able to bring a lot in," Hardie notes.

As for the schools, "We looked at six before we found one





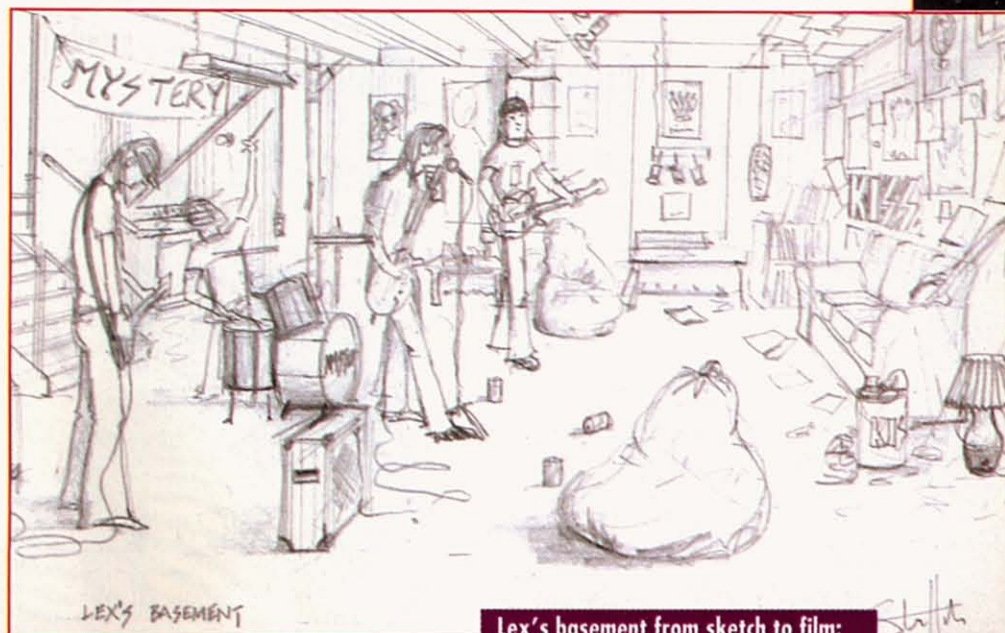
that looked right," Hardie says. "We painted the lockers orange and yellow, very '70s. It had to be done with a certain kind of enamel, but we couldn't paint during the day because of the fumes. We had to change the murals on the walls without ruining the ones that were there, so we did [new murals] on paper so they could be removed without damaging anything."

Outside scenes posed a different set of problems. "Exteriors are always difficult because you're dealing with the real world. Road signs have changed. The speed limits. When you're dealing with period, it's tricky. When on location we had to find locations that looked right and made it easier."

While in Hardie's opinion, "The '70s were a pretty ugly period," he feels that being able to approach recreating the time in America from the perspective of an English outsider worked to his advantage. "Sometimes you become more objective and analytical about it not using your own experience. I've never been an astronaut but neither has anyone who has designed a space movie," he points out.

While he's yet to design one of those, Hardie did work on *Revenge of the Jedi* fresh out film school in London, where his passion was originally cinematography and he'd studied for three years. He spent a year as a camera department trainee, moved into the art department with the Bond movie *Never Say Never Again*, and worked his way up from there. "I could always draw," he explains. His first break as a designer was Clive Barker's *Nightbreed*, and he went on to do others with Barker. He has also done makeup affects in London and in the U.S, where he has been living for 10 years though he's been back and forth to England for jobs such as *The Brylcream Boys*, about the RAF in 1941 Ireland, shot two years ago on the Isle of Man.

What's next? "Who knows," says Hardie. "I've done all sorts of things—comedy, period, horror. I haven't done anything futuristic. Horror and fantasy aren't my favorite as a moviegoer, however they're much more fun to work



Lex's basement from sketch to film: "Note Mrs. Bruce looking in through the window," Hardie points out in the pencil drawing. "The exterior was matched on location."

on. You're always doing something completely mad that requires special effects and fantastic things. Sometimes contemporary films can get a bit boring," he admits. "Recreating a police station isn't that challenging. But I'm pretty eclectic in taste and as scripts come along and they take my fancy," he trails off, mentioning his one season of *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*. "It was a lot of fun," Hardie says of his first American TV experience. "It was great because it was

slightly gothic. I didn't want to get stuck and do another season. But I enjoyed it because it was offbeat. Part of the fun of freelance work is you don't know what it will be next or where it will be," he offers. "I look at the positive elements of that rather than the insecure part of it. Even though it is insecure, it's exciting." •



Hardie designed a pair of scary gargoyles for the St. Bernard's school gate, which you can see in concept and constructed versions here. "These were sculpted in Styrofoam and plastered, and set in front of the existing school," Hardie explains. "Adam [Rifkin, the director] now has them at home."



**W**hile special effects have replaced a lot of humans in some aspects of moviemaking, Norton happily points out that costuming still requires the human touch.

"It's the last handmade product," says the designer, who makes her own clothing and purses.

On screen, she'd "like to do a period show, 17<sup>th</sup> century, but I'm open to anything."

## **COSTUME DESIGNER ROSANNA NORTON**

■ With all the nostalgia for things retro and the '70s in particular, you'd think it would be easy to find period clothing to dress the cast and extras in *Detroit Rock City*, and to some extent it was. But one-of-a-kind items don't work when you need wardrobe pieces in multiples, which meant creating lots of clothes from scratch, most of the time on tight deadline. This was the challenge costume designer Rosanna Norton faced, but it was one she embraced eagerly. In fact, having worked with director Adam Rifkin on *Barb Wire* and the TV series *Bone Chillers*, she "would have been furious" if he'd hired anyone else.



# *Designing* **DETROIT**



"He's a lot of fun because he lets you go wild and helps you go wild. A lot of directors are conservative. He's great," says Norton, praising Rifkin's artistic sense and vision. "Adam and I really communicate well and he can tell me what he wants. He'd go through racks of clothes, see something he liked, and then I'd figure out how to make it. He comes to the fittings. He's so helpful." But even with Rifkin's support, time remained Norton's biggest obstacle.

Production on *Detroit Rock City* began so quickly that there was no time to plan, and casting was so last-minute that Norton saw Edward Furlong and Sam Huntington for the first time on the set in Toronto (she had briefly met James DeBello and Giuseppe Andrews in L.A.). "We got the actors the day before they worked and we really had to scramble. We did [costumes for] the four boys in 48 hours," she says.

While thousands of authentic '70s garments were rented or bought for the movie at stores in L.A. and Toronto to clothe the actors and many extras needed for the crowd, school, and concert scenes ("I heard the last movie that had this many period extras was *Gandhi*," Norton notes), a workshop of seamstresses "made tons of stuff. They'd stay up all night and make clothes." Because the four male leads go through hell on their way to the KISS concert, their clothes were subject to catastrophe and Norton needed several identical versions for each actor. James DeBello's Trip wears an old burgundy hooded sweatshirt, but because multiples were required, "We started with new gray sweatshirts, dyed them burgundy, and bathed and sanded them down." Norton had assistants doing nothing but aging clothes to make them worn or torn.

Jam (Sam Huntington) "wears a T-shirt with one of those rubberized stencils that has worn off, so we sandpapered it and spray painted it through a screen," Norton reveals. "Making clothes look real, like they belong so you don't notice them is the most difficult thing. It's much easier when you can go wild and design something from the ground up and you know what you have available to use," she says.

For Natasha Lyonne (Christine), "We found this perfect jacket but it was a man's, so we cut it down and made two out of it," reveals Norton. For Shannon Tweed's Amanda, "I copied the Diane Von Furstenberg wrap dress that was so popular then." Lin Shaye, who plays Mrs. Bruce, tried on clothes from the multitude of wardrobe racks that filled every available room in the production office "so we could see the styles we liked" before her outfits were made from scratch. "We found one store that had great fabric, a whole basement full of this polyester crap that nobody wanted except for me. It was paradise—if I ever do another '70s movie, I know where to go," Norton laughs.

Stores also provided bell-bottomed pants and designer jeans, and one

Hamilton shop had a lot of '70s suits on hand. But dressing some of the female extras was more difficult. "We could get lots of coats, it was easy dressing the Mothers Against KISS. But the stuff for the groupies and hot-looking girls was harder because that stuff doesn't last." Those outfits were needed for the scene in which Lex (Giuseppe Andrews) climbs onto a ledge overlooking backstage, where a party is going on. "In the original script there were five groupies, but now we had hundreds of people. That was a little tough," notes Norton.

She used old fashion, teen, and rock magazines to do research on '70s styles, and refreshed her memory by watching *Saturday Night Fever* and *Carrie*, a movie she worked on over two decades earlier. "It was funny to watch it since I hadn't seen it since the cast and crew screening, but it was useful," Norton says. The *KISSTORY* book came in handy as well, as did KISS magazines like *Psycho Circus* and *Alive Worldwide*.

Even though she did not dress KISS for the big concert scene—"They did their own

more

Director Adam Rifkin designed the RFK High School emblem, and Norton and her crew had to create the chenille patches for jackets and reproduce it on uniforms for cheerleaders and the football team.



# Rock City



# Designing DETROIT ROCK CITY continued



Even though they're just "regular" clothes, the outfits worn by the main actors in *Detroit Rock City* had to be made from scratch. "Clothes from the '70s are popular again but the retro [copies] don't look right and we had to have everything in multiples because something happens to all the actors—we couldn't take the chance," Norton explains. "Fortunately we had a really good crew in Toronto. The seamstresses would be up all night sewing."

wardrobe and came with their own person," says Norton, who in fact never met the band on that very hectic day—she did work with stand-ins Hotter Than Hell, who wore actual duplicate KISS costumes. Norton also had to garb the thousands of extras in the crowd. "We made hundreds of denim jackets, leather jackets. I had an artist paint KISS things on them, like the fans do. We couldn't count on the fans to bring enough," she explains. "We made belt buckles and T-shirts, caps, and a lot of handmade things, studded and painted. Gene was kind enough to give us his archival things and we copied them." A lot of fans did show up in authentic '70s outfits, "But we had to make sure they didn't have anything on that was from after [1978]."

Norton was aware of KISS because her son, now a 32-year-old reggae musician called Dread Flimstone, was a KISS fan and attended concerts in his youth. "This could have been his story," she says of *Detroit Rock City*. She had a lot of fun on the set, despite the cold Toronto weather, and chalks that up to the people involved. "The thing that makes it a good working experience is the people and if you've got good people like we did on *Detroit Rock City* it's pleasant, and if you have bad people you're in hell and it doesn't matter how good the project is. One person who doesn't have a good attitude ruins it," Norton points out.

In 28 years in the business

working on about 50 films, she has been around long enough to know. Her credits include '70s-set *The Brady Bunch Movie* and its sequel, which proved to be good preparation for *DRC*, and *The Flintstones*, for which she had to make everything from scratch but had lots of time and money to do so. She's discovered that she doesn't care for sports-themed pictures—"I did a baseball movie [*Angels in the Outfield*] and I'm not a sports fan, and it's not that creative," the designer says, noting the painstaking detail required for uniforms. "On the other hand, I had a great time doing *Operation Dumbo Drop* with Danny Glover in Thailand," she says of the military comedy. "You go into a project and there's always something interesting. You don't know what will end up being fun."

Norton got into the costume design field by accident. "I majored in painting at UCLA but I knew I couldn't survive on that. I always drew clothes as a little girl. I've always loved clothes and I've always loved designing. But my father was an architect and my mother was an English professor and a poet. There's no movie business in my family," she says, explaining that she met film industry people while at UCLA through her first husband, a director. Together, they worked on the movie *Cisco Pike* with Gene Hackman and Kris Kristofferson, and she did double duty as art director and costume designer, but found that "it was too hard doing both." Back then, too, there weren't many female art directors and she felt more comfortable in the costume realm.

"I guess it was just fate, but I really love it," Norton says of her career. "It's really a great life. You get to meet lots of people, travel. There's always a challenge." She finds that she often gets jobs "because of people I worked with in the past," and enjoys the diversity of each. "You never know what's gonna happen. Every movie is different. The actors are always fun. And I always learn how to do something I never knew how to do before or I fail at something and have to study up. I can make wetsuits now," she says. "There's always something you get to do." •









# KEYS TO THE CITY

by Gerri Miller

## Four People Who Made it Happen

### BRIAN WITTEN: EXECUTIVE PRODUCER



■ "When I was 10 years old, buying *KISS Alive!* for \$10 in Paramus Park Mall, I'd never have thought that 20 years later I'd be making a movie with Gene Simmons," Brian Witten marvels at the unpredictable course his life has taken. The young KISS fanatic from New Jersey, who first saw the band play on the *Dynasty* tour when he was 14, is now Vice President of Production at New Line Cinema, and as such puts together the projects that turn into movies. "Four years ago, he and New Line President Michael DeLuca met with Gene Simmons in an effort to 'figure out a way to work together, but we didn't really have any ideas. We met with one writer and producer, but it never got to a place where it worked,' though he and Simmons stayed in touch. Then he read the *DRC* script, sent by Kathleen Haase with a heads-up from the Demon, 'and I loved it. So did DeLuca. We had a meeting and it all went very fast. Gene needed an answer or he'd go somewhere else. We thought it was perfect—it's such a great coming of age story. Not only were we doing a really cool movie, we were doing it with KISS."

In his 3½ years at New Line, Witten has supervised such diverse movies as *American History X*, *The Corrupter*, and *The Wedding Singer*, and he has two new projects in the works with the latter's star, Adam Sandler. The first is *Little Nicky*, in which the comedian plays the son of Satan (Dustin Hoffman) who doesn't want to follow dad into the family business. He also has a "Freddy vs. Jason" movie featuring the villains of the *Nightmare on Elm Street* and *Halloween* horror flicks. *Flight 180*, starring Devon Sawa, Ali Larter (*Varsity Blues*), and Kerr Smith (*Dawson's Creek*) is now in production, and he's once again working with Simmons on *Groupies*, based on a script by Alison Anders and Kurt Voss. Does Witten love his job? What do you think?

Meeting Gene Simmons for the first time was surreal for lifelong KISS fan Witten: "I was speechless," he recalls.

### TOMMY THAYER: OPENING CREDITS



■ He's KISS' tour manager when they're on the road and produced and directed the platinum-selling *Second Coming* video. Now Tommy Thayer has another impressive credit for his resumé: The opening credit sequence of *Detroit Rock City*. Cut to the song "Love Gun," the 2½ minute montage combines images of KISS and other pop culture visuals from the '70s. Thayer, editor Joe E. Botana, and designers at The Picture Mill to brainstorm ideas and choose among thousands of photos, newspaper headlines, and such era icons as the Rubik's Cube, the Pet Rock, and posters of Farrah, Fonzie, and *Jaws*.

"It's really exciting to be doing the title sequence for such an important movie," says Thayer, who's sure that his work on *The Second Coming* was "the key" to getting the job. Which was quite a task: "We dug deep into the KISS archives and found some great old stuff from the '70s that no one has seen since then, or ever seen. We opened the cans up to have it archived and transferred to high-quality video. It was an exciting thing to see this stuff no one's ever seen except the band and their management since 1975."

At the same time, Thayer and Botana were digitally archiving the old re-discovered 16 mm film ¾" tape and preserving it for future use, including 24 year-old footage of the KISS Day parade in Cadillac, MI. "It's very expensive but it's worth it," says Thayer of the process. "There's some amazing stuff. I've been around it for a long time so it takes a lot to impress me, and I was impressed." Don't be surprised if a lot of it turns up on a future home video release, a project that should keep Thayer busy between tours. "I have too many things on my plate but I'm happy because I enjoy this job and I like doing what I do," he says, noting that he's generally road managing and "doing about four other things at the same time." Nevertheless, his hard work is bound to pay off, perhaps in other film projects unrelated to KISS. "Very possibly," he nods, "Other things could come along out of this."

"We really dug deep into the KISS archives, deeper than we ever have before. I'm talking real '70s archival stuff," says Thayer of the material used in *Detroit Rock City's* opening credit montage.



## KATHLEEN HAASE: PRODUCER

■ Growing up in the '70s, Kathleen Haase first became aware of KISS through her best friend, a huge KISS fan who had posters of the band plastered on his ceiling. But even though she never saw the band live back then, she always appreciated them as entertainers and a cultural phenomenon. From the time she first saw the *Detroit Rock City* script, she knew she had to be involved in the making of the movie. She had met Barry Levine years ago when both were at Largo Entertainment, and he gave her the script. She in turn involved director Adam Rifkin, and from there it wasn't hard to interest the KISS fans running New Line Cinema, Michael DeLuca and Brian Witten.

Haase, who moved up from story editor to acquisition executive to producer with the acclaimed drama *Affliction*, is following *Detroit Rock City* with *Forever Mine*, a thriller directed by Paul Schrader and starring

Joseph Fiennes, Gretchen Mol, and Ray Liotta in a story about obsessive love. What makes her want to work on a project? "I look for really good scripts that move me, unusual, high-concept, or sweet, soulful, funny stories," she says. "Something that jumps off the stack of scripts." Just like *Detroit Rock City*.

Getting a lift from them here, Haase saw KISS live for the first time during the film shoot when the cast and crew took a bus trip to Buffalo, NY.

## BARRY LEVINE: PRODUCER

■ "I have come full circle with KISS," says Barry Levine, whose relationship with the band dates back to 1975, when he photographed them for the first time. "Never in a million years would I have thought that I would be producing a film with Gene Simmons—the ultimate KISS fan KISS film." But before *Detroit Rock City* there were many famous photo shoots, including the pictures heralding the band's reunion in 1996. KISS' theatricality and willingness to experiment with props—even moving ones like panthers and pythons—made them ideal subjects for Levine's lens, and their music made him a fan. Their concerts, he says, give fans "more than just the opportunity to sit and listen to some great music. They're giving them a visual feast."

Levine, whose favorite KISS song is "Black Diamond," first became aware of *Detroit Rock City* when a mutual friend of his and writer Carl Dupré, actor Kevin Corrigan, got him the script. Now there are other movies to co-produce with Simmons, but what remains paramount is friendship. "My relationship with these guys means more to me than anything else," he says. "I love Paul, Gene, Ace and Peter and I'm happy to see their success. We're all hoping that this film will be part of that success."

Levine, who has known KISS since 1975, picks "Black Diamond" as his favorite of their songs. "I think it's one of the best songs ever written," he says.

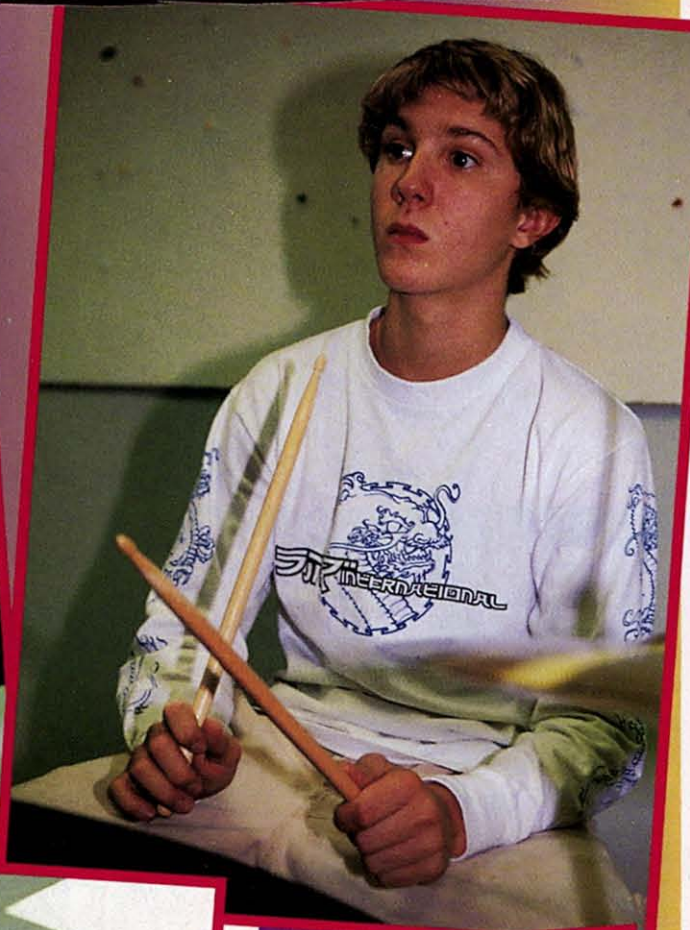
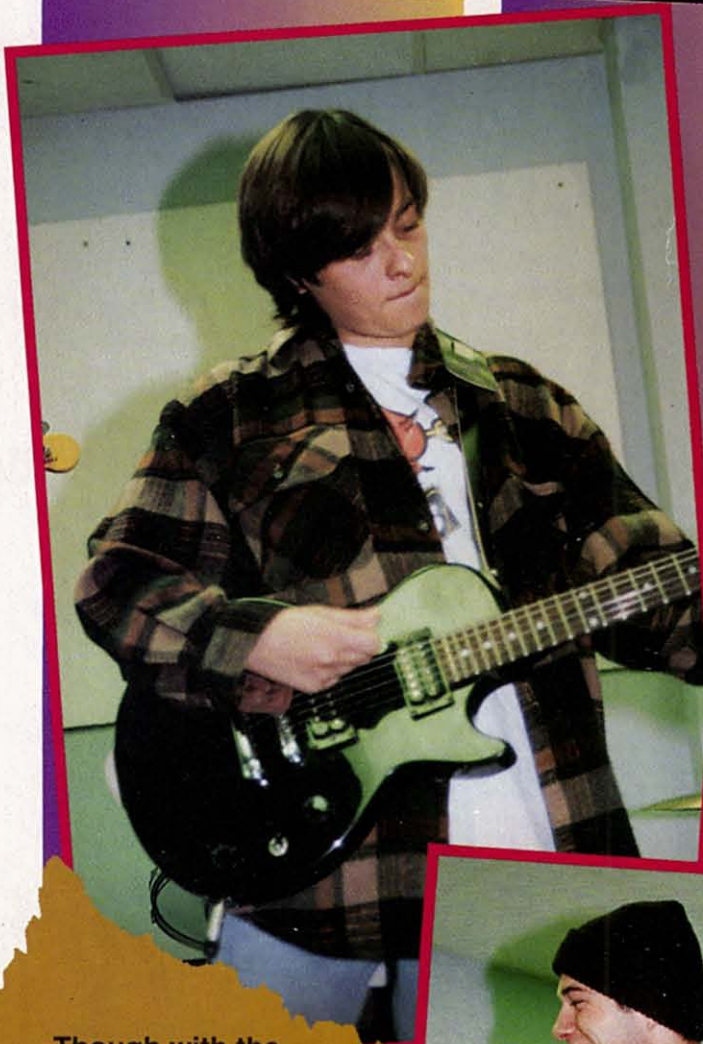




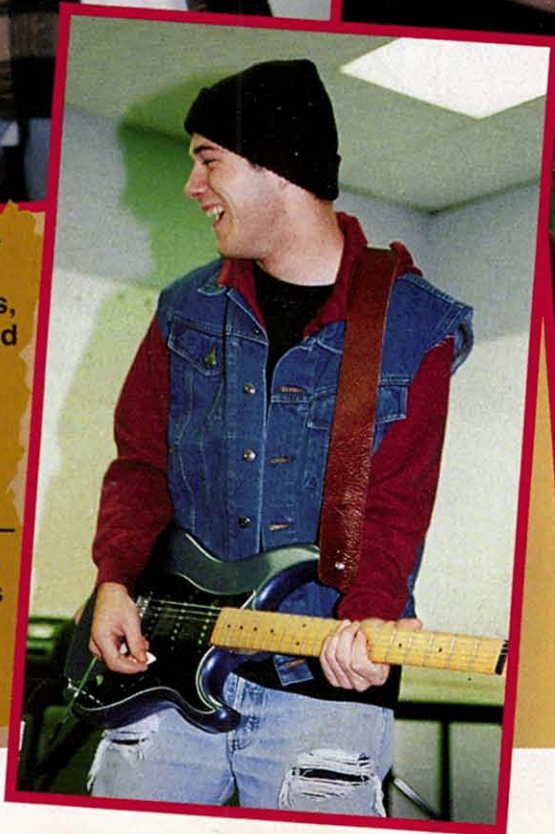
by Gerri  
Miller

# 'NAPS'HOTS'

Behind the Scenes at Detroit Rock City...Plus A Very Special Field Trip



Though with the exception of Giuseppe Andrews they're not experienced musicians, the four lead actors had to familiarize themselves with their characters' instruments before the shoot. "That's another thing I love about this movie—it's such a switch from *Jungle 2 Jungle*," says Sam Huntington, who readily accepted the challenge.





# FROM THE SET

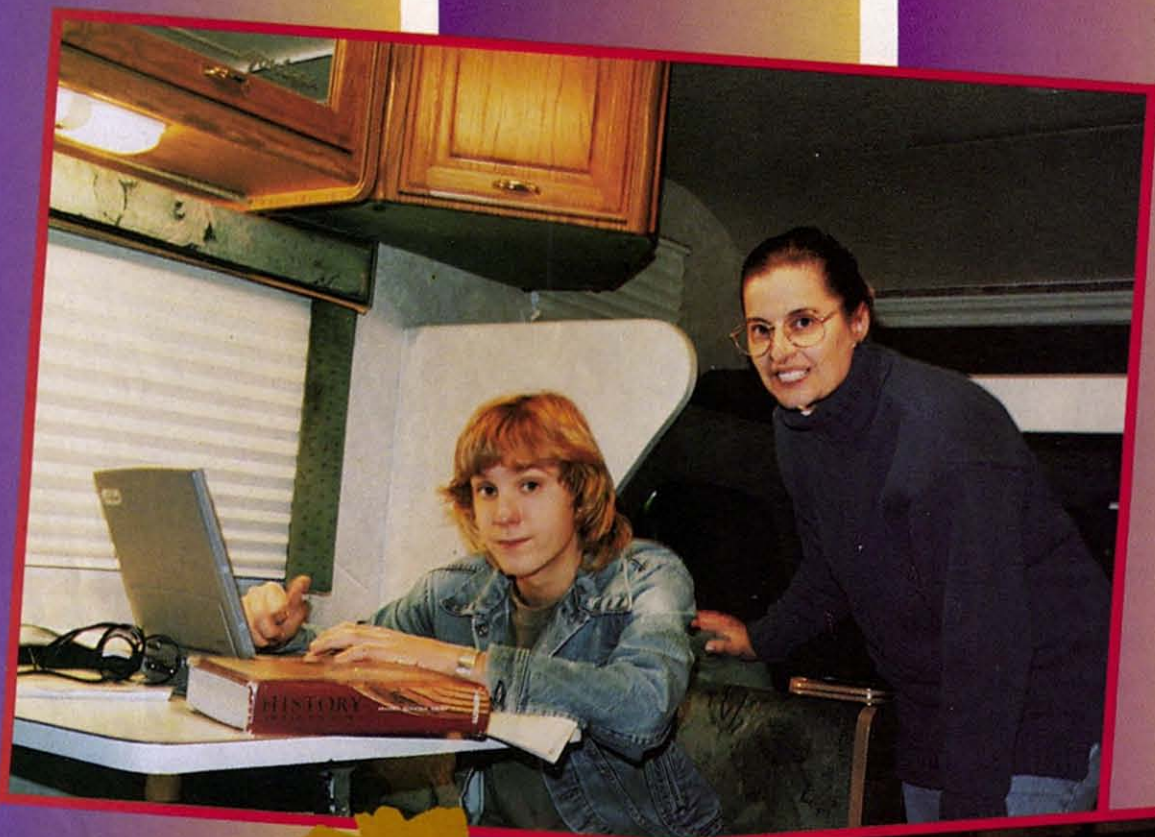


Tribute band Hotter Than Hell, hired to stand in for KISS to block scenes and position the cameras and lights, wore an actual set of KISS costumes supplied by the band. Folks on the set were definitely seeing double, especially when Scott McCluskey and Ace Frehley got this close.





# 'NAPS'HOTS'



Because he 's a minor, Sam Huntington had to have a tutor on the set and spend a few hours each day on schoolwork in his trailer.

KISS road crew (left to right, Ace Frehley's guitar tech Larry Cromer, drum tech Eddie Kanon, Paul Stanley's guitar tech Robert "Ragman" Long, and bass tech Mike "Spike" Rush) had to don era-appropriate clothes and wigs for the concert scene.





# FROM THE SET



On Nov. 29, 1998 the *DRC* cast and staff (including Giuseppe Andrews, Tim Sullivan, Kathleen Haase, Sam Huntington, Adam Rifkin, and James DeBello, pictured with Paul Stanley) bused to Buffalo to see KISS in concert and got the VIP treatment, with full backstage access. "I had the *Destroyer* album before but I understand a lot more [about them] after seeing them live. Awesome!," raves Edward Furlong about the concert. "They really put on a show."

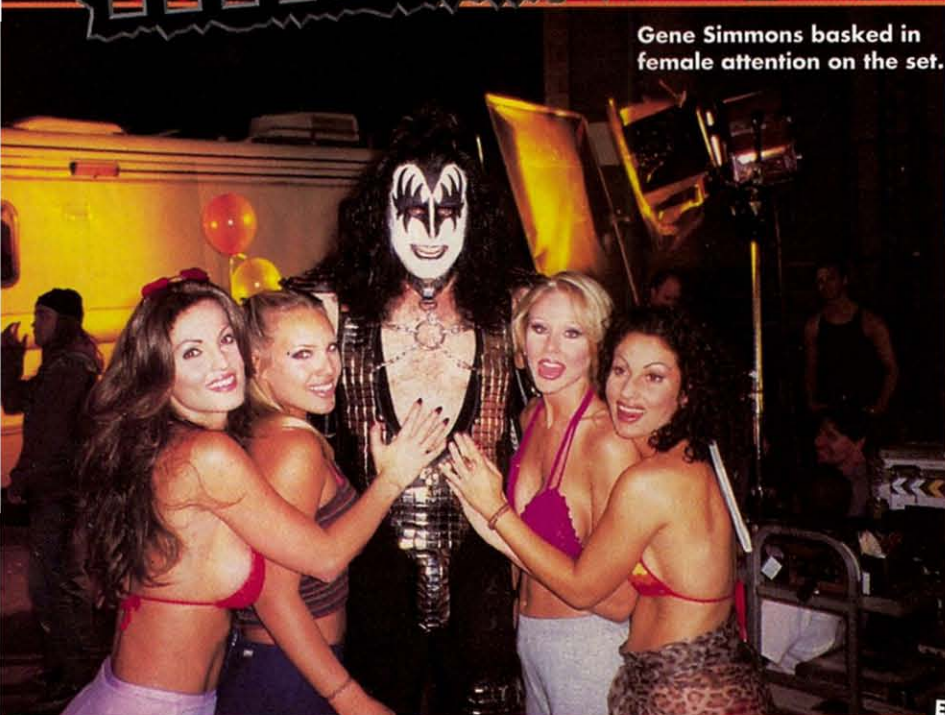


# VIDEO MANIA

## The Making of "The Boys Are Back In Town"

by Gerri Miller

Gene Simmons basked in female attention on the set.

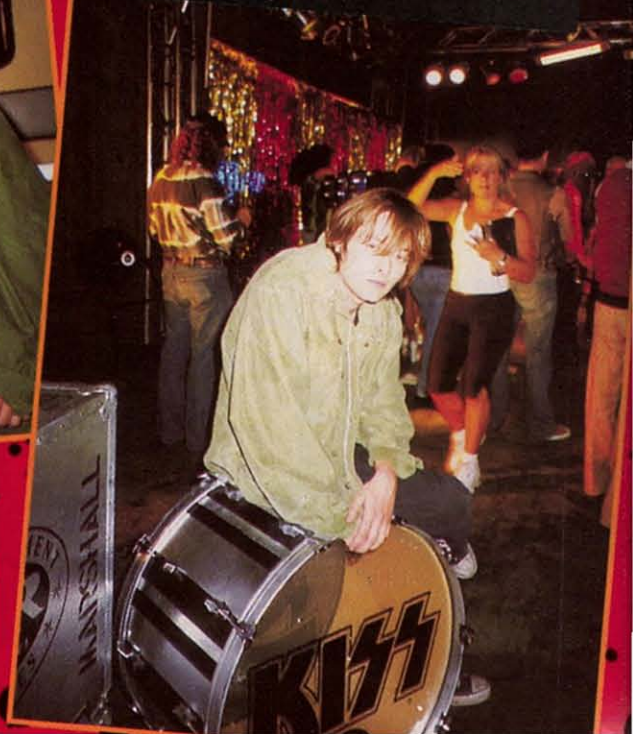


■ It was 1978 all over again, not to mention a *Detroit Rock City* reunion when the movie's four lead actors, director Adam Rifkin, and Gene Simmons—in full God of Thunder regalia—joined Everclear for the video shoot for "The Boys Are Back in Town," the first single and video release from the soundtrack. A loading dock area inside the Los Angeles Convention center was transformed (by DRC production designer Steve Hardie) into a carnival-like backstage party scene, complete with a dressing room trailer for Simmons, for the '70s sequences in the video (present-day scenes were shot on the following day). Bikini-clad porn actresses from Vivid Video and volunteer extras—KISS fans including one young lady named Miho who'd flown in from Japan specifically for the occasion—were on hand to populate the already colorful set, which was decorat-

Even though he had to rise at 5:45 to get to the set at 6:30, Furlong thought it was "cool being in a music video. It's a lot of sitting around, but it's not so bad," he said, though after a few hours of it he sighed, "I'm so ready to go home."



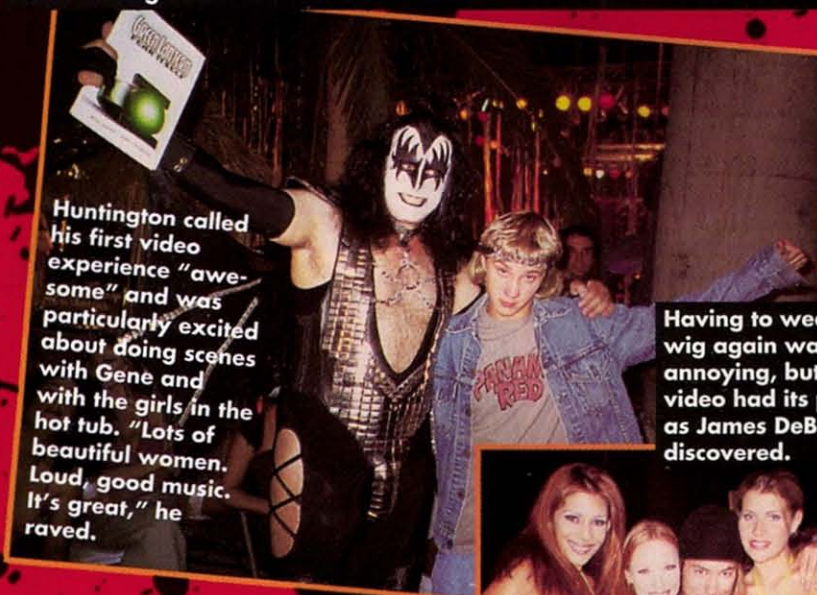
Though Huntington and DeBello were music video virgins, Furlong and Andrews have previously appeared in clips, Eddie in Aerosmith's "Livin' on the Edge" (though he doesn't remember much about it) and Giuseppe in the Smashing Pumpkins' "1979." While he saw some similarities, "This video is better because I get to work with Adam, who directed the film," he compared.







"I've always had a weakness for KISS," said Art Alexakis (on stage between scenes here), also naming Cheap Trick, the Ramones, and Sex Pistols as influences. "I love that power pop, slightly metal rock—melodic with good hooks." He's working on a solo record and starting to write songs for a new Everclear album.



Huntington called his first video experience "awesome" and was particularly excited about doing scenes with Gene and with the girls in the hot tub. "Lots of beautiful women. Loud, good music. It's great," he raved.

Having to wear a wig again was annoying, but the video had its perks, as James DeBello discovered.



ed with streamers, balloons, a working Ferris wheel, and a hot tub.

"It's a blast and everyone's having fun," said director Rifkin of working with his cast again, and he found his first video job a piece of cake compared to making a movie. "Anybody who says directing music videos is hard is lying," he said, noting that it's hard to go wrong as long as you get enough images and cut it to the music properly. "There's no continuity, nothing has to make sense or be logical," he explained. "There's no storyboard, no continuity, nothing has to match. When you're in a pinch, cut to the guy singing and you'll be fine."

The video intercuts scenes of Everclear performing with shots of actors Edward Furlong, Sam Huntington, James DeBello and Giuseppe Andrews being chased by security guards through the backstage area, finally winding up in Gene Simmons' trailer—where he's surrounded by a bevy of babes. Simmons, who was getting plenty of that female attention on the set, hoped that at some point KISS would be

Simmons was hoping that KISS would receive their star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame on the same day as the DRC premiere event, Aug. 9. A big party was being planned at press time, with possible performances by KISS and other soundtrack participants.



able to shoot a video for "Nothing Can Keep Me From You," but it's not definite as the covers by Marilyn Manson ("Highway to Hell") and The Donnas ("Strutter") would likely precede it as single releases.

Huntington, who had hair extensions for the movie, had to wear a wig for the video, as did DeBello, many of the extras and featured characters (notably skin flick actor Ron Jeremy, in a

continued

While he hoped it would look like a million bucks, Rifkin—with Andrews, Alexakis, Simmons, DeBello, Furlong and Huntington here—said the video's budget was relatively small: "It's not minuscule, but it's a lot smaller than it should be."





# VIDEO MANIA

giant afro as a security guard) and the members of Everclear. For the band's frontman Alexakis, it was a continuation of his KISS connection. A KISS fan as a young teen, he was in the audience at the *KISS Meets the Phantom of the Park* shoot in 1978, but comparing it to *Detroit Rock City*, "I think this is a better movie," he said. "I saw it and liked it, and I wanted to be part of it." While other songs were suggested, including the Guess Who's "American Woman," which Everclear had previously covered, he chose "The Boys Are Back in Town." "I told them, 'If you want me to do it, this is what I'll do.' It's the perfect song."

About 40 KISS fans, who'd found out about the shoot on the Internet (via KISSONLINE and Mtlodge.com), showed up to participate in the video, and the large contingent of on-set observers included various people involved in the film, crews from E! and MTV, and Natasha Lyonne, who wasn't in the video but dropped by to hang out with boyfriend Furlong.

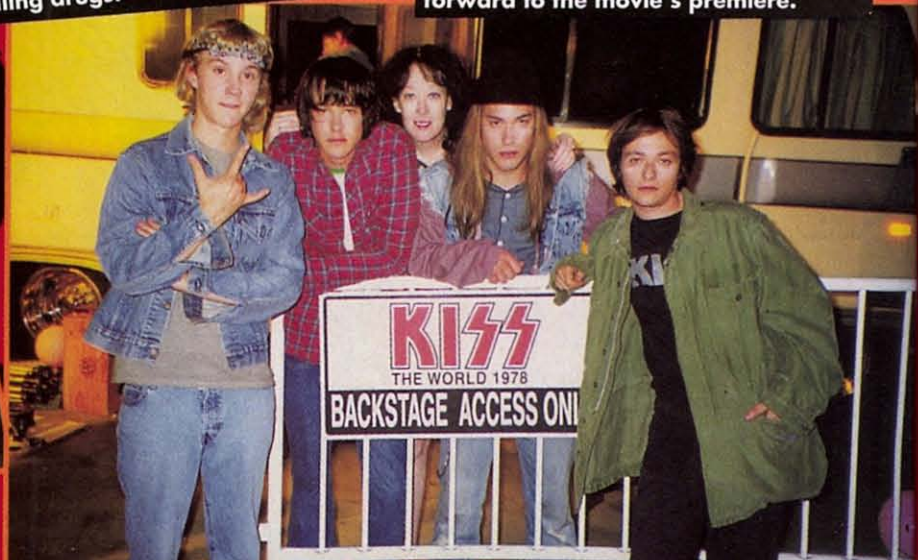
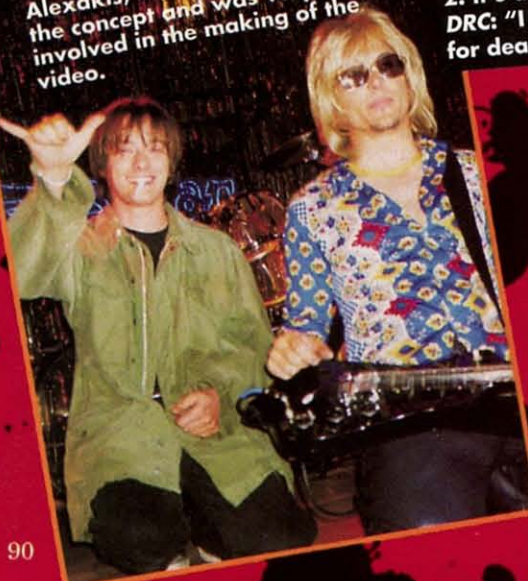
23 years since Thin Lizzy released "The Boys Are Back in Town," (which hit #12 on the *Billboard* chart), the classic song is getting a fresh spin and something it never had before: a great video. •

At one point in the clip, when the boys are being chased across the stage, Furlong stops to sing with a bewigged Art Alexakis, who came up with the concept and was very involved in the making of the video.

Sam Huntington flew in from New Hampshire with his mom Chris for the video. "I'm coming back at some point just for a vacation. Every time I'm out here it's to work," he explained. "I want to check out the USC campus."

Compared to directing films, making videos is "much easier," said Rifkin, with video veteran Furlong here. Ed was excited about his next part, in a film with Willem Dafoe called *Animal Factory* that was to start lensing Aug. 2. It's a change from the comedy of *DRC*: "I play a guy who goes to jail for dealing drugs."

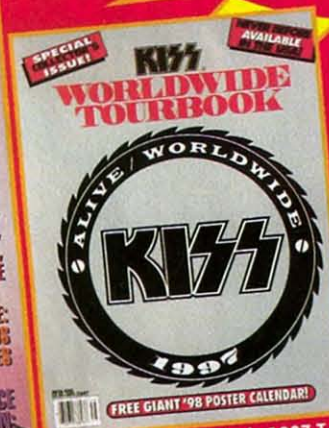
For the four actors, who hadn't been together as a group since *DRC* wrapped, the video was a fun reunion, and they told me they were looking forward to the movie's premiere.







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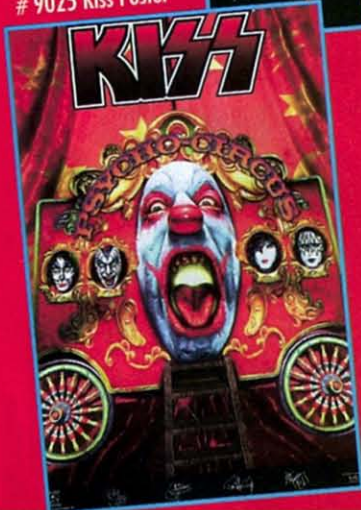


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# MOVIE MUSIC:

## DETROIT ROCK CITY'S ROCKIN' SOUNDTRACK

### KISS, Marilyn Manson, Pantera & More

by Gerri Miller

■ It's a formula for musical success: take three KISS songs—including one old favorite, one revised classic, and one brand new song—five classic '70s songs, and four classics covered by Marilyn Manson, Everclear, The Donnas and Drain STH, mix them together and you've got the *Detroit Rock City* soundtrack album, the audio companion to the movie and a great addition to anyone's collection.

KISS contributes "Shout it Out Loud," a newly recorded version of "Detroit Rock City," heard in the climactic concert scene, and the new ballad "Nothing Can Keep Me From You" (a fourth



**What was Marilyn Manson like in 1978, when *Detroit Rock City* is set? "A virgin, [with] acne. Hated God for making me that way."**

homage to KISS, "Strutter." "Highway to Hell," "Boys are Back in Town," and "Nothing Can Keep Me From You," which will be released as singles and videos, play over the end credits, but only '70s originals are heard in the film.

For Manson, being involved in the soundtrack was the chance to tip his hat to two bands that

made a big impression on him when he was growing up. "KISS was my first concert in 1979, so I could relate to exactly what the characters in the story were going through," he says of *Detroit Rock City*. He chose "Highway to Hell" and "was surprised how juvenile it was. It worked that way for AC/DC but not for us so we revamped it. I've always considered AC/DC to be one of the archetypal 'satanic rock bands,' this being the anthem that sent us all on a path we would never return [from]," he adds. Manson, who has headlined European festivals this summer and was slated to tour Japan starting Aug. 2, is readying a live album for November release while working on a script and music for a movie of his own.

Gene Simmons raves about the soundtrack, especially the new cover versions, and calls them "very cutting-edge stuff." Nevertheless, he underlines that the new songs have a lot in common with the classics from the '70s: "What hasn't changed is the spirit. It's gonna be great," he promises. "You'll be knocked out." Turn to page 94 to find out how you can win a free soundtrack CD! •



**Pantera remade Ted Nugent's "Cat Scratch Fever" for the soundtrack, but the Nuge's original version is heard in the movie.**

song, opening credits tune "Love Gun," was axed for lack of space). The classic list features Van Halen's "Running With the Devil," Black Sabbath's "Iron Man," David Bowie's "Rebel, Rebel," Cheap Trick's "Surrender," and Thin Lizzy's "Jailbreak," and the new covers are Marilyn Manson's version of AC/DC's "Highway to Hell," Pantera's take on Ted Nugent's "Cat Scratch Fever," Everclear's remake of "Thin Lizzy's "Boys are Back in Town" (the first single), Drain STH's redo of T-Rex's "20th Century Boy," and The Donnas'



**The new KISS ballad "Nothing Can Keep Me From You," written by Diane Warren, "is one of the best vocals I've ever heard Paul sing," praises Gene Simmons.**



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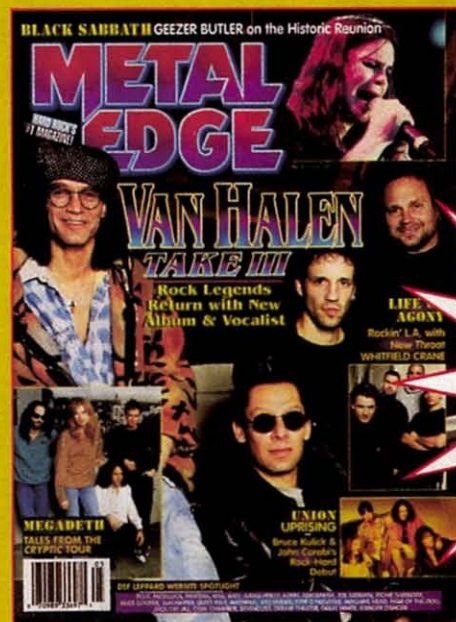
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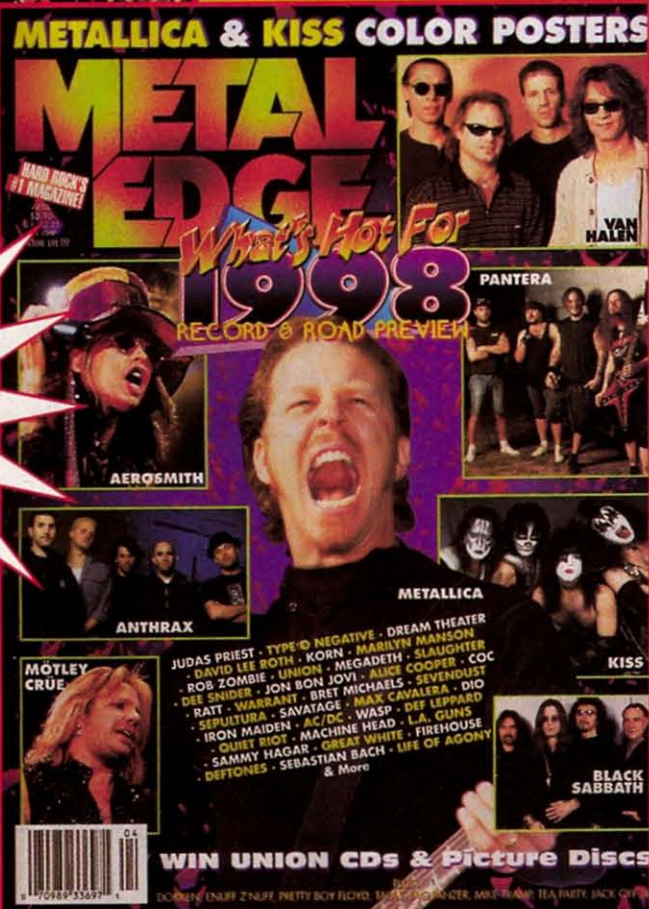
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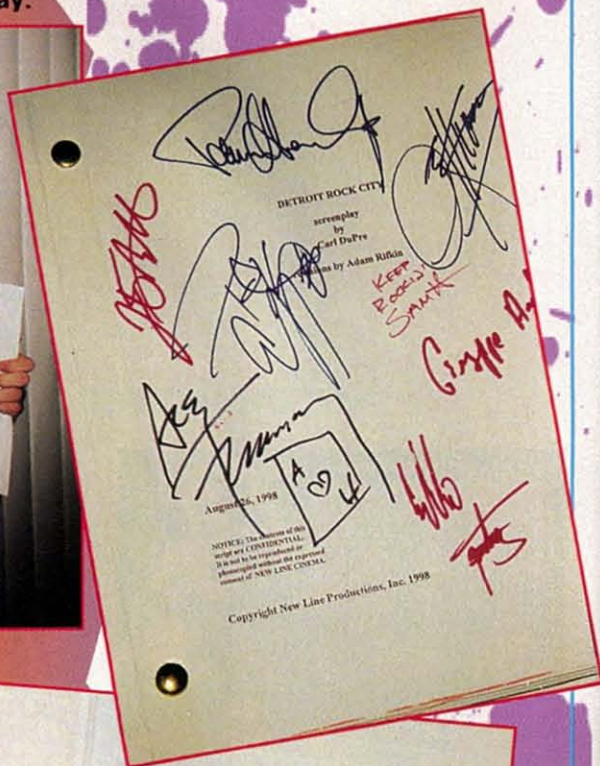
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Sam 'Jam' Huntington models one of  
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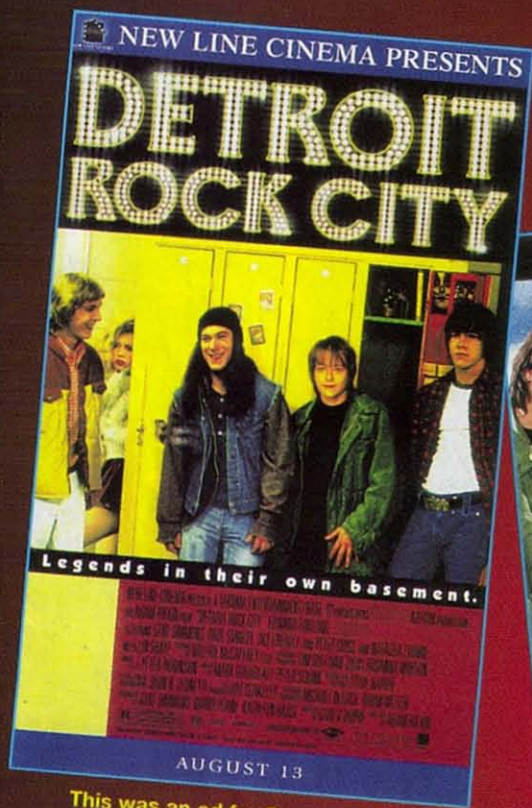
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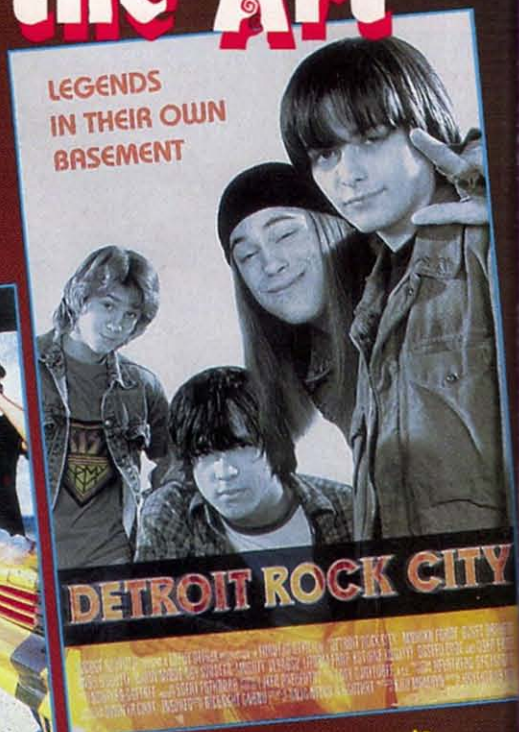
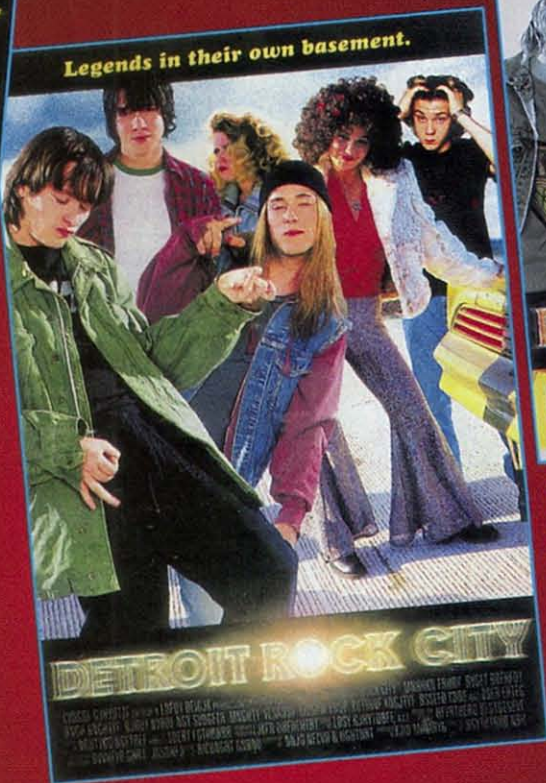
# DRC's POSTER

## The Story Behind the Art

by Gerri Miller



This was an ad for *Detroit Rock City* that ran in the New York and Los Angeles *Times* but was rejected for the poster.



"They were perfectly valid ways to go—New Line was doing the right thing—but my gut feeling told me to go in this other direction," Rifkin analyzes the decision to choose the cartoon poster over ideas like these (note the gibberish credits). A different rendering is forthcoming: *Mad* magazine's parody, *Mad* magazine's parody, *Detroit Shlock City*.

■ Every picture tells a story, and the illustration that became *Detroit Rock City*'s poster art has a lot more to say than most. The colorful cartoon that depicts the movie's four heroes on the run is also populated by a throng of familiar faces, including those belonging to KISS and other characters in the film. And for eagle-eyed fans of *Where's Waldo?* or those who just like a good inside joke, you'll be able to spot the producers and director Adam Rifkin, who came up with the poster's concept.

Though illustrated key art hasn't been used to promote non-animated films in years and New Line Cinema's marketing department had been playing with several ideas featuring *DRC*'s actors, Rifkin took inspiration from classic cartoon posters for '70s films like *Rock 'n' Roll High School*, *American Graffiti*, and *Animal House*, *Mad* magazine, and the Beatles' *Sgt. Pepper's* album cover, and sketched out a basic idea. He met with illustrator Phil Roberts, showed him the idea, and paid for the commission out of his own pocket. "I wanted to see if it would work, and if it didn't at the very least I'd have something cool to hang on my wall," Rifkin explains. It was done in about a week, and he "feel in love with it." But what if New Line didn't? Fortunately, he presented it "and everyone felt the way I did. But I don't believe they'd have gone for the idea if it they hadn't seen it first. So the risk paid off, and they paid me back."

Some minor changes had to be made, however, since the original sketch included other famous '70s icons like Sonny & Cher, John Travolta, and Steve Martin, whose likenesses could not be shown endorsing the film without their permission. Rifkin is thrilled with the finished product. "I grew up with these kinds of posters, like the one from *It's a Mad, Mad, Mad, Mad World*," he says, "so this is a dream poster for me." Find out how you can win one (or other great prizes) on p. 94.

The *DRC* CD cover zeroes in on the four guys, but the full poster will be sold via Spencer Gifts and other outlets. Artist Phil Roberts has drawn Shannon Tweed before, in key art for the movie *Hot Tub*.





# DETROIT ROCK CITY

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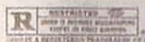
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# DETROIT ROCK CITY



Featuring new versions of 70's classics

**Everclear The Boys Are Back In Town**

**Marilyn Manson Highway To Hell**

**Pantera Cat Scratch Fever**

**Drain sth 20th Century Boy**

**The Donnas Strutter**

and the new **KISS** single

**Nothing Can Keep Me From You**

plus original music from **KISS**, **Black Sabbath**, **Van Halen**,  
**Thin Lizzy**, **Cheap Trick**, **Sweet**, **Runaways** and more.

**AVAILABLE AUGUST 3**

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# DETROIT ROCK CITY

**KISS THE RULES GOODBYE**

NEW LINE CINEMA PRESENTS A TAKOMA ENTERTAINMENT/BASE-12 PRODUCTIONS/KISS NATION PRODUCTION AN ADAM RIFKIN FILM "DETROIT ROCK CITY"  
EDWARD FURLONG GIUSEPPE ANDREWS JAMES DeBELLO SAM HUNTINGTON **KISS** FEATURING GENE SIMMONS, PAUL STANLEY, ACE FREHLEY AND PETER CRISS

NATASHA LYONNE AND LIN SHAYE CASTING BY VALERIE McCAFFREY, C.S.A. SUPERVISORS SPRING ASPERS AND ALLAN KAUFMAN ASSOCIATE PRODUCER TIM SULLIVAN COSTUME DESIGNER ROSANNA NORTON

MUSIC BY J. PETER ROBINSON EDITOR MARK GOLOBLATT, A.C.E. PETER SCHINK PRODUCTION DESIGNER STEVE HARDIE DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY JOHN R. LEONETTI CO-PRODUCER ART SCHAEFER EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS MICHAEL DE LUCA BRIAN WITTEN

PRODUCED BY GENE SIMMONS BARRY LEVINE KATHLEEN HAASE WRITTEN BY CARL V. DUPRÉ DIRECTED BY ADAM RIFKIN

SOUNDTRACK AVAILABLE ON

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